EXCLUSIVE! ONLINE CALL MANAGER ON THE CD – ALERTS YOU TO CALLS WHILE YOU'RE ONLINE

Practical Internet™

MAKING THE MOST OF THE INTERNET

ISSUE 39
£3.99
WITH CD-ROM

GETTING ONLINE CHEAPER, FASTER AND EASIER

Secrets of the Net revealed!

- Amazing ISP freebies
- Video messaging
- Email to fax and back
- Cut-price Net phone calls
- Knockout newsgroups
- Online file back-up

HIT THE JACKPOT!

Take on the Net's top betting sites – step-by-step guide

WIN! LEXMARK COLOUR PRINTERS WORTH £400

ON YOUR FREE CD

EXCLUSIVE! FULLY WORKING PROGRAM

ONLINE CALL MANAGER

Alerts you to incoming phone calls when you're online

PRINT ARTIST 3

FULLY WORKING PROGRAM WORTH £20

Spruce up your site! Create great-looking banners, buttons and graphics for your Web pages with this simple-to-use art package

WORTH £20

PLUS:

MORE THAN 50 OTHER PROGRAMS!

Earn a fortune – Seven online gambling programs to make you rich (or poor!)
Browser booster – New NeoPlanet v5.1 for great-looking Web browsing
Message mania – Five of the best email programs for you to try out

NO DISC? Ask your newsagent for it now! (Not available outside the UK)

MAKE THE NEWS

Transform your Web site with live news feeds and constantly updating content

Are you addicted?

Hooked on email? Can't live without cyber sex?
Find out if you're a Net junkie on page 34

Paragon Publishing Ltd
9 771366 766022 39

PLUS: Fireworks 3 made easy • Best email programs revealed • Free ISP listings

You understand your products and market. We understand the Internet. Together we can create a tailored solution for all your E-mail, E-commerce and Internet needs.

With the increasing pace of change in the world of the web, it is easy to feel left out and left behind. But now the right sort of help is at hand.

At Magic Moments we have our own network and our own resources. We provide mission critical Internet services to some of the best known names in business and we can do the same for you - simply, efficiently and cost effectively. We offer the most comprehensive E-commerce, shopping cart and hosting solutions available and specialise in world-wide domain name registration.

Magic Moments - Our business is to serve you.

Freephone: 0808 100 6200 www.magic-moments.com

Email & Web Hosting Packages:

All our Email and Web Hosting packages also include: domain name registration or transfer, daily backups, Smart UPS and technical support.

ALL packages come with FREE Internet connection which benefits Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children.

Email Packages:

Magic EBasic **£40pa**
- Unlimited Email addresses
- Single Email routing

Price excludes naming authority fees

Magic EPlus **£75pa**
- Unlimited Email addresses
- 10 POP Email boxes
- Remote control panel via web interface
- Multiple Email routing

Price excludes naming authority fees

Email & Web Hosting Packages:

Magic SoHo **£130pa**
- 30 MB web/hosting space
- Unlimited Email addresses
- Single Email routing
- Full FTP access and personal CGI-BIN
- Remote control panel via web interface
- Full graphical site statistics

Price excludes naming authority fees

Magic Standard **£155pa**
- 50MB web/hosting space
- Unlimited Email addresses
- 10 POP Email boxes
- Multiple Email routing
- Full FTP access and personal CGI-BIN
- Remote control panel via web interface
- Full graphical site statistics

Price excludes naming authority fees

New NT Hosting Solutions:

Simply add the price below to any of our web hosting packages:

NT Frontpage	**£50pa**
NT Frontpage, Access, ASP, CGI	**£180pa**
NT Frontpage, SQL, ASP, CGI	**£330pa**

Transfer your domain name to our network and start saving today!

MAGIC MOMENTS

Our business is to serve you

Magic Moments Internet plc
Email: enquiries@magic-moments.com/
Terms: http://www.magic-moments.com/terms/

No hidden set up charges!

Magic from the Heart £195pa

Special Package

- 75 MB web/hosting space
- Unlimited Email addresses
- 15 POP Email boxes
- Multiple Email routing
- Unlimited Email autoresponders
- Full FTP access and personal CGI-BIN
- Remote control panel via web interface
- Full graphical site statistics

Price excludes naming authority fees

£10 from this package is contributed to charitable causes. Charities include: NSPCC, Great Ormond Street Hospital, Imperial Cancer Trust. Details: http://www.magic-moments.com/charity/

Registered Charity No: 235825
© 1989 GOSHCC

Magic Enterprise £255pa

- 100 MB web/hosting space
- Unlimited Email addresses
- 20 POP Email boxes
- Multiple Email routing
- Unlimited Email autoresponders
- SSL secure server
- Full FTP access and personal CGI-BIN
- Remote control panel via web interface
- Full graphical site statistics

Price excludes naming authority fees

E-commerce Services

E-commerce solutions (including SSL)	from £65 pa

Other Services

Additional web/hosting space (10MB)	£25 pa
Database facilities	from £200 pa
Filemaker Pro database hosting	from £200 pa

Naming Authority Fees

UK domains (.co.uk, .org.uk)	£5
Global domains (.com, .org, .net)	£45
Ireland domain (.ie)	£95

Based on two years fees. Fees are subject to change without notice due to fluctuations in exchange rates.

200+ Countries Available - Call Now!

Freephone: 0808 100 6200 **www.magic-moments.com**

*Applies to packages registered from November 1st 1999. All trademarks and registered trademarks acknowledged. All packages exclude VAT where applicable and are subject to change without prior notice.

Welcome...

...to issue 39 of *Practical Internet*. With so many positive things happening on the Net these days, it's frustrating that recent press coverage has been dominated by the high profile 'denial of service' attacks on big-name sites like Yahoo!, CNN and eBay.

You'll find a blow-by-blow account on our news pages too – but it's important to put the whole story into perspective. Each of the sites was slowed down or stopped working for no more than three hours, and the safety of users' personal details was never compromised. Despite this, each of the companies' stock prices took a beating, Bill Clinton called in the FBI after holding "crisis talks", and the world's media leapt on the story. It was another chance to raise more fears about security. Yet, in fact, the Net is a far safer place to shop than even your high street, where crime rates are considerably higher.

Mark Newman, Editor
mnewman@paragon.co.uk

Practical Internet: the mag with a mission

We're here to explain as clearly as possible how you can use the Internet to save yourself time, money and hassle.

Whether you're a complete beginner, an intermediate user or an experienced Net surfer, all our articles are aimed at helping you understand and master the Net. Using step-by-step tutorials, extensive hardware tests, and special product reviews, we're dedicated to providing you with the information you need.

We're always ready to help you, so if anything is unclear or you think we're not living up to our promises, please write to us.

Contact The Editor, *Practical Internet*, Paragon Publishing, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 2JS or email him at **mnewman@paragon.co.uk**

Conte

ISSUE THIRTY NIN

SPRING 2000

SHHHH!

24 ***The Net's greatest secrets revealed! Find out how to take advantage of amazing ISP giveaways, video messaging, cut-price Net phone calls, email to fax services and lots more!***

WHAT'S ON THE COVER CD?

SEE PAGE 108 FOR FULL DETAILS OF THE SOFTWARE YOU CAN FIND ON THIS MONTH'S FREE CD

ONLINE CALL MANAGER
It's happened to all of us at some time or another. You've gone online and you've missed an important telephone call. It's annoying and frustrating. Fortunately, it need never happen again if you make use of the fully working version of OnLine Call Manager on this month's CD. This clever program offers an entirely subscription-free service that notifies you of incoming calls while you're on the Net and does not require a second telephone line. In other words, you can stay on the Web and stay in touch at the same time. OnLine Call Manager allows you to instantly manage all of your incoming calls, whether you are using the line for Internet access or using a remote number, such as your home telephone from your office. When a call has been received, the details appear in an interactive pop-up window on your computer screen, providing free Caller ID indication of who is calling and presenting eight options to manage that call, including subscription-free voice mail service with on-screen notification of any messages.

PRINT ARTIST 3
It's important that your Web site looks great if it's going to be popular with Net users. Great graphics and other imagery helps to break up the text on your page and make your site interesting to read. With this in mind, here's a fully working program

What's inside this issue...

8

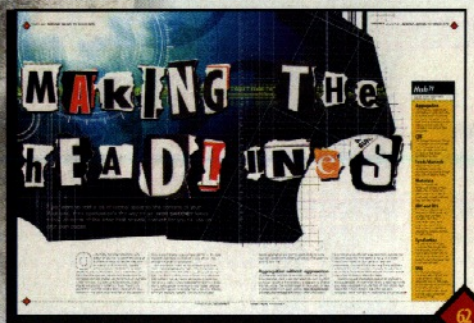
INFONATION

The latest happenings in the world of the Net, including the latest on those denial of service attacks. Plus look out for Net Watch, Sludge and all the usual regulars

42

YOU BETA BELIEVE IT!

Microsoft's popular Web browser has had a makeover, so we ask whether it's worth getting. Is it just marketing hype from Bill Gates or does IE 5.5 offer real improvements for Net users?



62

NEWS FOR YOUR SITE

Adding live newsfeeds and other constantly updated content to your Web site gives it a fresh feel and attracts visitors to come back time after time. We tell you how to do it

34

ARE YOU ADDICTED?

Net addiction is a very real problem for many thousands of people, if claims by the experts are anything to go by. Find out if you're one of them and discover where to get help

46

DON'T LOSE YOUR SHIRT!

Gambling online is easy and you can win loads of lovely dosh – so how's it done? Find out, as we go wild spending £40 on the nags, soccer and greyhounds. Did we win? Read on to find out...

ISSUE 39

IT'S ALL IN PRACTICAL INTERNET

8 **InfoNation** THE LATEST INTERNET NEWS
19 **Backchat** READERS' COMMENTS
21 **Net Shopping** SPEND, SPEND, SPEND!
24 **Net secrets revealed!** USE HIDDEN NET TECHNOLOGIES
32 **Web Watchdog** BEEN RIPPED OFF? WE'LL SORT IT!
34 **Are you addicted?** GET HELP FOR NET ADDICTION
42 **Is it Beta than ever?** INTERNET EXPLORER 5.5 TESTED
46 **Place your bets!** GAMBLING ON THE NET
53 **Competition** WIN LEXMARK PRINTERS
55 **Home Improvement** CREATE A KILLER WEB SITE
62 **Make the headlines** ADD LIVE NEWSFEEDS TO YOUR SITE
70 **Subscription offers** CHOOSE A FREE GIFT HERE!
73 **Site Seer** CLUBBING, FORMULA ONE, HISTORY
81 **Soft Spot** EMAIL PROGRAMS TESTED AND MORE
92 **Hardwired** NET HARDWARE NEWS AND TESTS
96 **Net Surgery** GET YOUR PROBLEMS SORTED
103 **NetGamer** ONLINE GAMING NEWS, REVIEWS
108 **What's on the CD?** FULL CD CONTENTS LISTING
115 **Free ISP listings** FREE ISPS GO HEAD TO HEAD
122 **Glossary** BAFFLING NET SPEAK EXPLAINED
129 **Next month** DEFINITELY DON'T MISS ISSUE 40!
130 **FAQs** JONO, THE RADIO HOT SHOT

to create some artwork. Print Artist 3, worth £20, lets you create signs, business cards, letterheads, certificates, greetings cards, banners, postcards, envelopes, calendars and crafts in no time at all. A number of different effects can be applied to your images, including different colours, text alignments, shapes, fonts and even drop shadows and cut outs.

NEOPLANET 5.1

If you're getting bored with the look of Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator then maybe it's time to take a look at some of the Web browsing alternatives. NeoPlanet is one option that's well worth considering in light of the launch of its new 5.1 version. Available in the Soft Spot section of the cover CD, it offers many improvements over previous versions, including the addition of searching facility, FlySwat, which delivers answers on-the-fly. Replacing the Alexa service from previous versions, FlySwat helps you quickly and easily find the right information on the Web. For those who enjoy a natter on the Net, there's also an enhanced instant messaging facility with NetClubs. Among the features that have been added are a new Club Away mode, new Alert features, the ability to Cut/Copy/Paste text from and to your instant messages.

topukwebsites.com

Computers & Gadgets

capital.uk.com

Capital technology brings you the best in computers, software and accessories for both home and corporate solutions. From custom built PC's, built to your requirements to laptops, scanners and playstations, Capital Technology is the ultimate home and office PC centre.

hotbox.co.uk

HotBox.co.uk is the place to get all the latest gadgets, boys toys and stuff you can't live without. Where else could you find remote controlled motor bikes, MP3 watches, million pound puzzels and powerboats?

carphonewarehouse.com

An easy to use and cleverly designed website. Lets you search products according to different criteria such as tariff, network and phone type. Offering special Deals every single day not found on any other website.

21store.com

21store.com has forged its position as a leading e-tailer of digital products. We provide brands like JVC, Casio, Garmin, Fuji and many more, at competitive prices and with unsurpassed customer support. We know digital.

House & Home

qvcuk.com

The online department store. Over 8,000 products in fashion, jewellery, home and garden, electrical, health and beauty and collectables and gifts, plus special offers and information about its parent, QVC The Shopping Channel.

maelstrom.co.uk

Maelstrom offers contemporary gifts, lifestyle accessories and furniture to buy on our secure online site or can be ordered by phone or fax. Our wide range includes, Alessi, Guzzini, Authentics, Floss, Magis, Dualit, Mathmos etc.Free delivery in the UK.Call 01202 556882 for a free catalogue.

homefreehome.co.uk

HomeFREEHome.co.uk is the revolutionary new site allowing you to buy and sell your house FREE from estate agency charges. We charge absolutely NO FEES and NO COMMISSIONS to buyers and sellers alike. Be part of the vision...be part of the future!

empiredirect.co.uk

Now you can save up to 30% off high street prices on all the latest top brand electrical goods. Choose from the very latest in home entertainment products, domestic appliances, hi-fi separates, and in-car entertainment. So click on to www.empiredirect.co.uk now and discover the fantastic savings you can make.

Entertainment & Games

crazyelectric.com

The nation's prime entertainment last-minute bargains site! 100 fabulous deals a day on PC hardware, software and games, console games, TVs, VCRs, DVDs, Hi-Fis, kids' software and educational software. Check back every day!

alphabetstreet.com

Enjoy the complete online book buying experience at Alphabetstreet, with discounts of up to 50% on all books; a unique loyalty scheme, and all the latest from the book world.

dvdworld.co.uk

DVDworld is the leading online store for all UK DVD titles and players. There's secure ordering at discounted prices, and mainland delivery is FREE of charge.

jungle.com

jungle.com is the UK's leading online computer and entertainment superstore offering all you could want for your PC plus CDs, games and video at the lowest prices online. Buying from jungle.com is simple and secure and its speedy delivery service is FREE for all products.

Health Fashion & Jewellery

fragrencedirect.co.uk

Up to 50% off designer fragrances. Not bothered about the box, then our tester bottles are the answer. Make substantial savings on genuine fragrances with many 100ml bottle selling for the price of 50ml.

thejewellerystore.com

The Jewellery Store: quality jewellery and watches at remarkably low prices. And to prove that these are genuine savings we supply the gold and diamond weights - The Jewellery Store, one of the wobs little gems.

auravita.com

Welcome to Auravita.com, Europe's leading Health, Beauty and Fitness superstore. A superb range of health and beauty products to buy, backed by on-line news, nutritional advice and extensive health information. Watch for our promotions and special offers.

designerdiscount.co.uk

The latest branded designerwear at discounted prices! Jeans, Sweatshirts, Shirts, T-Shirts, Jackets etc. You'll be pleased you looked. Up to 75% off RRP! Orders are taken securely and normally delivered within 5 days. Revisit us regularly as we are constantly updating our range.

take the sifting out of shopping on the net ...

we've got shopping sorted

Food & Drink

bbr.co.uk

BERRY BROS & RUDD

Berrys' Internet Wine Shop brings 300 years of personal service, expertise, and an unbeatable range of wines on-line. With delivery throughout the UK and beyond, enjoy our 1300 strong list with wines from £3.95 a bottle.

vegnet.co.uk

top website

vegnet

'Ultra fresh Veg via the Internet'

Veg-net supplies ULTRA FRESH; vegetables, salads, fruit, exotics, herbs, organics and prepared products, via the internet, straight from the farm to your door within 24 hours. Delivered to the home, office, hotel or restaurant throughout the UK. Taste the freshness!!!

iceland.co.uk

ICELAND

Iceland offer frozen, fresh and grocery products and is the only UK food retailer to offer nation-wide Internet Shopping. Iceland promises to fight for 'food you can trust'.

chocexpress.com

CHOCEXPRESS
Delivered Chocolate Gifts

For the very finest quality chocolates, delivered with your personal message. To order or request a free catalogue, call 01763- 25 77 44 or visit our website at www.chocexpress.com and quote Top1 for the latest Hot Chocolate offers.

Motoring

autobytel.co.uk

top website

autobytel.co.uk

Autobytel, the world's largest internet based new and used car buying service, launched 9 months ago and have already had over 1.5 million users to the site. Autobytel empowers consumers with uniquely aggregated information to help them make informed purchasing decisions.

rac.co.uk

RAC

Visit the RAC site today and find all the latest motoring news, views and information, as well as an exclusive offer on RAC membership. Find the latest RAC Traffic News and the unique RAC Route Planner online.

eaglestar.co.uk

EAGLE STAR

Eagle Star, a pioneering UK insurance provider on the Internet, offers online quotes and immediate purchase of car, home and travel insurance.

hertz.co.uk

Hertz

Check out the website for Hertz (www.hertz.co.uk), the world's largest car rental company, to find out information on special holiday offers, special small business packages, car specifications, locations, driving advise and what's more you can even book on-line.

Leisure & Travel

ebookers.com

top website

ebookers.com

Looking for a flight? Need a short break? Whatever your travel need, find the solution online at www.ebookers.com . We have extensive access to millions of discounted airfares, fantastic holiday bargains, free on-line travel services and so much more. ebookers.com - don't be here, be there.

kitbag.com

kitbag.com
THE sports shop for THE sports fan

Kitbag.com, the sports shop for the sports fan, is the place to buy football, rugby and cricket gear on the web. A huge range of official replica and retro shirts, leisurewear, videos and other merchandise is available, and with free next day delivery in the UK!

laterooms.com

LATE ROOMS

Late Rooms
Where Hotels reduce their room rates, hour by hour until the Hotel is full. Features over 1100 Hotels and 100,000 reduced rate rooms every day. Ideal for business or pleasure - UK and abroad.

qxl.com

QXL.com
online auctions

Register with QXL online auctions right now and get some outstanding PC software for just £1! Simply type in 'www.qxl.com/top' and experience the best bargains on the web.

Specialities

teleflorist.co.uk

TELEFLORIST

Teleflorist is the UK's largest network of professional florists. We offer a wide range of bouquets for every occasion - all individually-designed and hand-delivered. Order securely on-line for same day or next-day delivery.

tyrwhitt.com/top

top website

CHARLES TYRWHITT
Shirtmaker of fine shirts
JERMYN STREET LONDON

Charles Tyrwhitt Shirts, of Jermyn Street, sell both classic and casual shirts and accessories for men and women. Buy with confidence the site is secure and all products are covered by the Charles Tyrwhitt guarantee. Buy using this URL and get a 10% discount for a limited period only.

lastorders.com

lastorders.com

You'll never run out again with lastorders.com, the on-line off-licence, where your favourite drinks come to your home at great value.

smile.co.uk

.co .uk
smile the internet bank
from

Visit smile, a bank built for the Internet. We offer a full range of accounts - current accounts, student current accounts, no-notice savings accounts, ISAs, loans and credit cards. All offering rates to make you smile!

...come and visit *the* topukwebsites.com

<<< BEME UP LOTTY

BeMe is a new lifestyle site for women. Aimed at helping women organise their lives, the site describes itself as the Internet's most comprehensive destination for women and recently struck a large sponsorship deal with Channel 4's *Ally McBeal*. Visitors to www.beme.com are offered the opportunity to customise the site as their own Net portal.

INFONATION

The complete **insight** into all things **Internet...**

Saboteurs go on Net rampage

BIG NAME SITES FALL VICTIM TO DENIAL OF SERVICE ATTACKS FROM HACKERS

URGENT security reviews are underway at some of the Net's biggest corporate monsters after a wave of high-profile attacks brought them to their knees. Yahoo!, CNN, Amazon and eBay were the targets of a series of 'denial of service attacks' in which a deluge of data flooded the sites. These forced them offline, or slowed their operations.

The news making the headlines at CNN's site is it's recent denial of service attack

Although the technique employed was an old trick, it is being used in a powerful new way to topple sites. In Yahoo!'s case, it was bombarded with data at rates of up to 1Gb per second. News of the attacks sent the value of Internet stocks tumbling as their vulnerability to cyber vandals was painfully displayed.

Yahoo!'s attempts to play down the attack did not calm the nerves of investors. The search engine – which was knocked offline for three hours – refused to estimate how much the attack cost it in lost revenue. Some city analysts are estimating the costs could run into hundreds of thousands of pounds. The attack was executed just days before Valentine's Day when large numbers of gifts are sold.

Other analysts believe the effect will be more psychological than financial since Yahoo! prides itself on being 'unhackable'. The site experiences attempted denial of service attacks on a regular basis, but it's usually able to override them by re-routing its resources. This time, though, it couldn't. "It happened so quickly and intensely we just couldn't redirect the traffic," said a spokesperson.

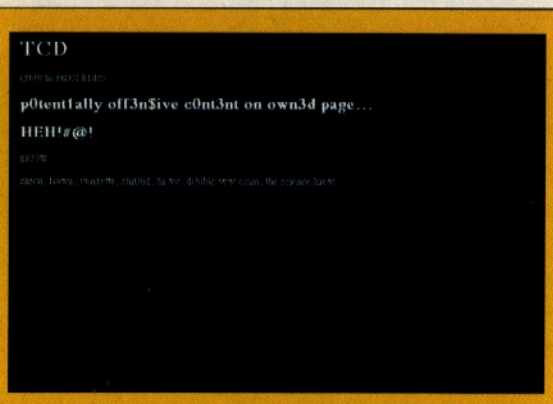
Fortunately for Net users, in none of the incidents were the attackers able to gain access to any private information, such as passwords.

Meanwhile, UK sites are now braced for similar action. A

Films such as *The Matrix* and *Hackers* never tackle the cost involved for a company that's hacked

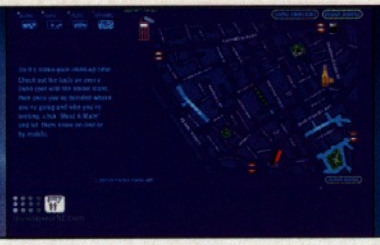
HACK OF THE MONTH

UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK



www.ul.ie/

THE Irish are well known for their sense of humour, but no-one at Limerick University was laughing when their Web site was recently hacked. Six lines of virtually unreadable text was scrawled onto a black background and this was used in place of the Uni's normal home page. It was signed by five hackers and the 'science krew'.



<<< WAP OF THE WORLD

We can't get enough of WAP phones and this new site, MyWapWorld, loves them just as much as us. Visit www.mywapworld.com and you'll find a comprehensive guide to WAP technology, hardware and software. If you can be bothered to get the Flash plug-in you can watch some funky animations, too.

How the attacks took place

THE series of denial of service attacks on sites such as Amazon.Com may have only lasted a few hours, but their impact will be felt throughout the Net industry for years to come. The attacks are not new – they have been around for several years and most Internet server firewalls can repel them, while most IT managers know how to track down the perpetrators. But these latest attacks used a relatively new tactic.

The crackers sent a continuous stream of poorly formed IP packets – or Internet data – at the sites, while the attacking machines generate what appears to be normal messages. These data packets claim to come from the same server that's receiving them. In trying to respond to this miscommunication, the victimised server eventually becomes unable to accept any more connections.

Yahoo!'s attack enlisted the support of a large number of different attackers, making it difficult for Yahoo! to restore its services and locate the perpetrators. Thousands of servers can be co-opted by a malicious programmer to tag-team a single server.

spokesperson for Freeserve, the third largest global domain in the UK, said, "We have invested an awful lot in the service and are confident of our security. The opportunity for people to stop our service will be minimal."

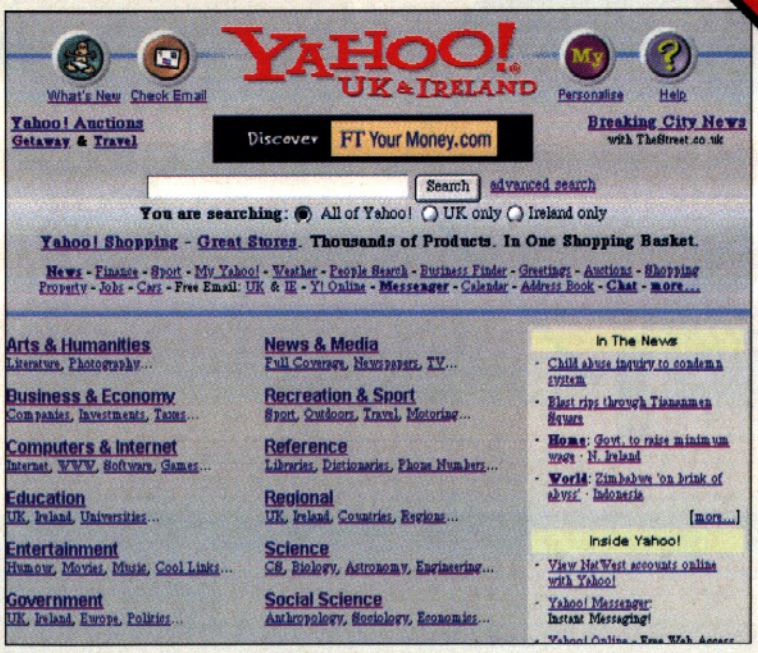
No prevention

But one of the biggest problems with denial of service attacks is that they are impossible to detect in advance. Another problem is that the culprits are rarely traced and brought to justice. Paul Cronin, head of penetration testing at computer security company CenturyCom, said: "At the moment, it is impossible to lock intruders out. The only solution is to have intrusion detection systems in place to detect the hacker before he has a chance to cause any damage."

Cronin added that when an attack of this sort is detected it may already be too late. "The problem at Yahoo!, was that the hackers were only detected when it was already too late to put the necessary filters in place to block unwelcome guests. The hackers work by sending the program to multiple sites around the world, so it is probable that Yahoo! was attacked from all sides."

NEWSBYTE

Internet retail giants Amazon has once again posted larger than expected financial losses. But the firm expects to turn a profit by the end of 2000 and it is a well publicised fact it has opted to forgo short term profits in favour of brand building.



Hackers AIM for AOL

HACKERS CRACK INSTANT MESSENGER

WITH a host of major Internet services falling pray to malicious attacks recently, it has been more a question of who hasn't, rather than who has, been hacked.

AOL is the latest high-profile victim. Pranksters were able to take control of the firm's Instant Messenger (AIM) chat software by exploiting a security 'hole' in the company's procedures to crack it within minutes.

It appears the security hole is very simple to exploit. Hackers can take control of those AIM accounts belonging to users without separate AOL accounts. Because AOL's Online service can be used to change the passwords of AIM accounts, the hackers open an account in the name of an AIM user. The actual process is a tad more sophisticated, but it is still relatively easy for those with even a little hacking knowledge to execute.

NO GOOD BUDDY

The most serious question raised by this security breach is that of privacy. With access to an AIM account it would be possible for those with malicious intent to impersonate the user online and communicate with that user's 'buddies'. In the most serious case reported in America hacker posed as a child to obtain credit card details from an unsuspecting parent.

AOL's Instant Messenger software is a real-time chat client used by over 40 million people worldwide. The program allows them to chat with fellow users who are online at the same time and build buddy lists regular contacts.

AOL has always pointed out the importance of security to members and tells customers never to reveal their passwords. AOL's UK spokesperson, Joss Cole, highlighted AOL's security policy to *Practical Internet* readers.

"AOL UK has a highly comprehensive security policy. We have a dedicated in-house team which develops policy and tackles security issues. Members can always contact member services free of charge".

Hunting for the hackers

FINDING the perpetrators responsible for the denial of service attacks on eight of the world's top Web sites is 'very difficult, if not impossible,' according to security experts.

"It will be virtually impossible (to track the attackers down)," said one hacker identified as 'Mixter' who wrote the Tribe Flood Network, a tool used to cause denial of service attacks. "All providers have to scrutinise their router logs tracing back traffic," – and that's a time-consuming process.

Even Yahoo! has admitted its probe would be "a very difficult, long process." A Yahoo! spokesperson said: "It's largely because the traffic is mock traffic. It's not easy to track down the IP addresses from which the attack originated. These are very smart individuals using sophisticated software that makes it very difficult to trace."

Even if the FBI's own investigation is successful, federal agents will most likely end up just finding the host computers that the attackers co-opted to do their dirty work, rather than the attackers themselves. It's no coincidence that, although denial of service attacks take place every day on the Internet, few arrests have ever been made.

<<< DO YOU BELIEVE IN PODD?

Podd stands for Picture on Direct Demand and the company is a new online picture and card seller. Check out www.podd.co.uk to browse through a number of different galleries offering themed images of everything from romance to wildlife. If you see something you like, you can order it and have it delivered framed or unframed by the site's Interpodd service.

Free call ISPs receive boost

BUT FOR MANY USERS THE MISERY CONTINUES

THE embryonic 0800 Internet access market has been given a boost. Two of its most prominent providers, CallNet and X-Stream, both recently announced improvements to their existing services.

CallNet has finally reopened its CallNet0800 service to prospective members, while X-Stream has declared initial free call trials a success and pledged to extend the service.

Subscriptions to CallNet0800 were originally suspended after a deluge of subscribers meant the service was unable to cope. Bosses were left with no option but to suspend registration while the backlog was cleared.

"We suspended registration so that the all-important quality and speed of access we offered our users would never be compromised by the volume of people using the service," explains CallNet CEO Paul Goodman-Simpson. "As promised we are now reopening registration as we have the capacity to cope with the hundreds of thousands of people who want to enjoy totally free Net access."

Meanwhile, X-Stream has announced that its 24/7 0800 service, originally only available for a trial period throughout January, will be extended "indefinitely".

Both ISPs, however, continue to be dogged by complaints. CallNet's claim to have fulfilled all subscriptions has been greeted with scepticism from a number of sources, while many of X-Stream's users have been unable to connect, despite the success of trials with the ISP's 500,000 users.

"We've gone beyond what we promised to deliver" says X-Stream MD Paul Myers. "There were never any guarantees that people would get on in the first place."

• See Web Watchdog on page 32 for more information about 0800 ISPs.

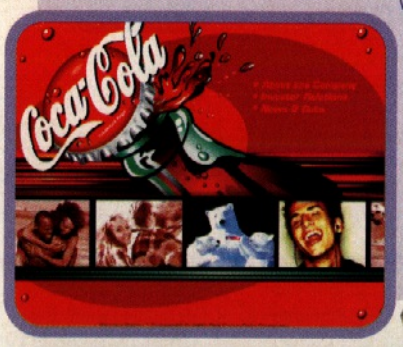
It's no Coke

A trademark dispute between soft drink behemoths Coca-Cola and a fan site has ended in domain administrators Maxistore being forced to close an apparently harmless site.

In a $100,000 law suit, it was made clear by Coca-Cola that unless all links to Coke products were removed from **www.vintagecocacola.com**, the site would have to surrender use of its domain name. Maxistore's site was originally created so collectors of Coca-Cola merchandise, such as old bottles and antique posters, could sell, exchange and swap their products over the Net.

In a similar case, online retailer Etoys was also involved in a domain dispute with art group etoy, although in a victory for small firms everywhere, the Etoys action was defeated in court.

Both controversies have appeared in the wake of laws passed by US Congress prohibiting 'cyber squatting', the practise where well-known domain names are bought by individuals with **bad intentions.**



The Sludge Report

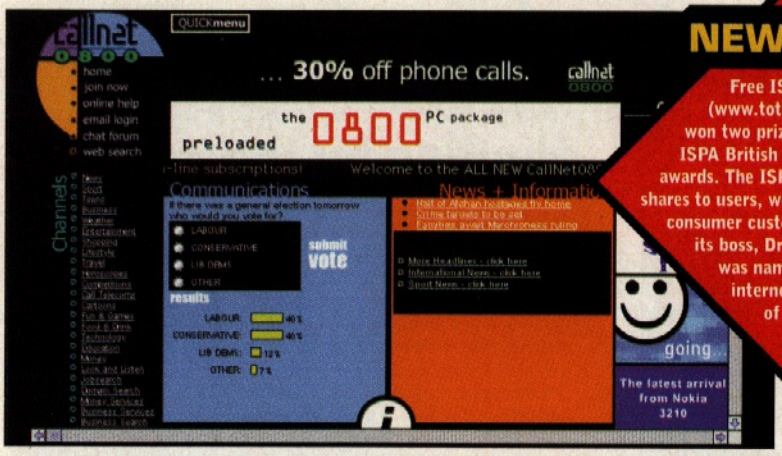
SALACIOUS SATIRE FROM THE SUPERHIGHWAY

• One of the things that's kept Sludge going has been the joy of having a good laugh at the Tories. Not content with being made to look like idiots in parliament, they've now fallen victim to a hacker.

Visitors to the Conservative Party's pitiful Web site may have been surprised to see the following link, **www.tory.org/home/bollocks**, which poked fun at the party's cash for questions fiasco. Not Sludge though, after all these people are politicians.

• In a pathetic case of Net desperation, Sludge learns that American John Alanis, desperate for a date on Valentine's Day, auctioned himself on ebay. The auction eventually closed at $45 begging the inevitable question not why the amount had been so low, but why it had been so high.

• Sludge is naturally loathe to poke fun at our European cousins in Germany, especially when they do such a good job of it themselves. To prove our point a new survey has revealed that a worrying nine per cent of German PC owners have kissed their computer.



NEWSBYTE

Free ISP Totalise (www.totalise.net) has won two prizes in the annual ISPA British internet industry awards. The ISP, which offers free shares to users, won the award for best consumer customer service, while its boss, Dr Peter Gregory, was named the UK's internet colossus of 2000.

topukwebsites.com
32 of the top UK Shopping sites
we've got shopping sorted...take the sifting out of shopping on the net

number one!

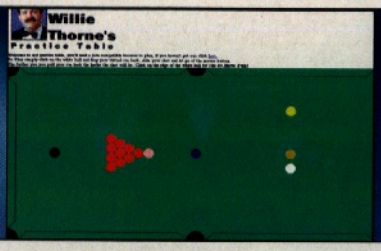
Free Internet Service Provider of the year

Heard the news yet? We're number one, numero uno, the cat's whiskers, the bee's knees, officially the best free ISP in the country. And we have the medal to prove it. So if you're not a FreeUK member then why not?

For the best in free Internet access open your account online at www.freeuk.com

FREE UK

www.freeuk.com or call **0845 355 5555**



<<< WILLIE'S A THORNE STAR

This is one of the best new sites we've seen in ages. Set up by balding baize wizard Willie Thorne, it offers expert advice on a variety of different sports, however at time of writing the only sport covered in detail is Snooker. Willies' tips and tutorials are all very well, but it's the superb Practice Table Java game that we think wins the day.

NETWATCH

INTERNET FREEDOM'S **CHRIS ELLISON** CASTS A WATCHFUL EYE ON THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN CYBERSPACE

THERE are two technological innovations that are currently creating a storm on the Net. They go by the names of 'Napster' and 'my.mp3.com'. They both make it easier to distribute music over the Net. And the developers are both being sued by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA).

Napster is a very simple piece of software. You install it. Place your favourite MP3 music files in a folder on your hard disk. Then connect to the Net. Immediately you have access to every other Napster user's MP3 files (and they to yours). All the files are automatically catalogued on the Napster server. As CEO Eileen Richardson put it: 'Everyone looks at Napster and goes, 'Holy S**t!'. That is certainly what the RIAA must have done, alleging that Napster encourages piracy. Napster argues that it doesn't store the files, and isn't responsible for whether users have legal or illegal copies of music.

IT ALLOWS NET USERS TO ACCESS MP3 MUSIC FILES FROM ANY COMPUTER, ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

My.mp3.com is just as simple, but even more clever. Launched early this year, it allows Net users to access MP3 music files from any computer, anywhere, anytime. As MP3.com CEO Michael Robertson described: 'This is so cool, it's going to blow you away.' You put a CD in your drive. The details of the CD are sent to MP3.com. They then transfer MP3 files corresponding to all the tracks into your folder on their server. With your password you can then download them from anywhere on the Net. Since you put the CD in, MP3.com is not technically giving you anything you didn't already have. Except the RIAA disagree, since it might not have been your own CD, or your own password.

It's war. On one side is the recording and music distribution industry trying to protect its sectional interests in the face of Internet technology. On the other side is the future of digital music. Do I need to say which side I am on?

Internet Freedom can be contacted on campaign@netfreedom.org. The campaign's Web site is at www.netfreedom.org

Hip WAP just don't stop

WIRELESS PHONE TECHNOLOGY TAKES OFF

BARELY months after we first saw the *Matrix,* Wireless Internet Protocol (WAP) has become the example for all that is hip and trendy in the world of mobile communications and Net access.

Phone, media and software companies are eager to strike deals as the technology begins to develop. Nokia has experienced huge demand for its 7110 handset, featured in issue 37.

It is reckoned that up to 20 per cent of future eCommerce could come through WAP phones. This has prompted WH Smith to launch of a WAP book buying service. Elsewhere, Bob Geldof and former England rugby international Brian Moore have teamed up to help promote and provide content for the WAP portal, Wap World. And firms like iobox (**www.iobox.com**) are offering a free WAP inbox to help people manage their emails.

WAP technology allows people to surf the Net and access their email from a phone handset. It allows you to access services in the same way you would use a PC to access email and the Internet, except four times faster.

Users select a text link from their phone screens to access content from sites. As the technology develops, sites will offer specific content for WAP.

Whether it's booking a table or reading emails, you can be sure this technology is here to stay. Second generation phones capable of reading full HTML lie just round the corner, so don't blink.

Have a flutter online

HIGH street bookie Ladbrokes has finally moved into online gambling with the launch of two Gibraltar-based tax free gambling sites. Bet UK (**www.bet.co.uk**) is aimed at British gamblers, while Ladbrokes.Com (**www.labrokes.com**) is a multilingual, multicurrency site. The betting giant will also launch an interactive betting service on Sky Digital in time for the start of the new football season in August.

Although the company admitted that customers have been concerned about spending money online, Labrokes' international managing director, John O'Reilly, explained customers provided with an onscreen betting receipt showing the bet has been accepted.

According to economic research group MMD, the worldwide betting industry will soon be worth over £520bn each year. O'Reilly said, "British bookmakers account for around 15 per cent of the worldwide gambling market and, as the world's number one, we expect to gain around a third of that figure."

*** See our special feature on Internet gambling on pages 46-50 of this issue.**

con X

Join conX today...
communicating with conX

www.conX.co.uk

free unlimited Internet Access
free access to conX's on-line service
no on-line charges
100% nationwide local call access
free 20Mb web space
free sub-domain and unlimited email addresses
- *someone@yourchoice.conX.co.uk*
fast access speeds up to 128kbps
free access to news servers

National Rate Support Line
Call for CD on 0900 7770055
Calls cost 50p per minute

THE INCLUSIVE BUSINESS PACKAGE

INCLUSIVE
Technical Support
7 days a week - your business will always have help to hand. Our dedicated technical support team is there to help.

INCLUSIVE
Lan connectivity
A fast, 128k digital dial-on-demand service provides full, simultaneous Internet access for staff. Being dial-on-demand, you only pay when you are using the service- a local rate call*

* A 64k connection is a local rate call. 128k connections are two 0845 local calls bonded together.

INCLUSIVE
25Mb of Web space
25Mb of Web space within your domain (http://www.yourcompany.co.uk) is allocated for your business use (subject to the operating terms and conditions on our Web Site).

INCLUSIVE
Unlimited e-mail addresses
Every employee in your company will have their own e-mail address.

INCLUSIVE
Pre-configured router & firewall
Routers are configured to each individual customer's requirements. In addition, an integrated firewall protects your network from intruders.

INCLUSIVE
Domain name registration
Unique domain name to identify your company (yourcompany.co.uk).

WEB DESIGN
Option
To complete your Business Package, a bespoke design service is available to promote your company, product and services on the Web.

£550
£646.25 INC VAT

The Enterprise Business Package offers everything to get you onto the Web, including hardware, a unique domain name (yourcompany.co.uk - subject to availability) and infinite e-mail addresses.

Connecting to the Internet via Enterprise could not be more straightforward. We take care of the technical issues to ensure your Internet LAN service is on-line as seamlessly and as quickly as possible. To find out how you can benefit from the Enterprise Business Package contact our sales staff on our dedicated telephone sales line or by e-mail at sales@enterprise.net.

No 1
Voted Number One by NetBasics

TEL: 0845 604 0174

ENTERPRISE
INTERNET SOLUTIONS

Sales Enquiries
http://www.enterprise.net
E-mail
sales@enterprise.net

<<< CURE AND SIMPLE

THERE are numerous health resources lurking on the Net, but now we've got the first UK pharmacy. AllCures has a group of online stores which come across like an online Superdrug. A visit to the www.allcures.com portal allows you to choose from entering the pharmacy store for those life saving paracetamols or heading towards a more lifestyle-oriented shop.

Digital love affair

COMPACT DIGICAM IS IDEAL FOR WEB SITE DESIGNERS

THIS new camera from Fujifilm will not only fit into the palm of your hand, but also claims to have one of the fastest image processing systems on the market. It's great for taking pics and then using them on your Web site. With a 6x zoom lens featuring the best of optical and digital lens technology combined with the power of 1.5 mega pixel resolution, you can be confident that pictures will come out looking good – just remember to keep your fingers off the view finder! The MX-1700 can be all yours, as long as there's a spare £400 sitting in your bank account.

PRODUCT:	FUJIFILM MX 1700
PRICE:	£399.99
CONTACT:	www.fujifilm.co.uk

THE ULTIMATE WEB ADVERTISING TOOL

The b-wiz means e-biz

Seamlessly Streams And Rotates any Number of Interactive Animated Ads in a Single Billboard

Downloads Over The Internet In SECONDS!

Automatic Motion Sequencing Throughout

Creates Fully Animated & Interactive Rotary Billboards In Minutes!

Compact File Sizes

Saves Time, Space & Money

No Animation Skills Required

Simple Drag and Drop Editor

Runs Embedded In Any Web Page

Very Powerful & Comprehensive Ad-Tracking Facility in Each Billboard

No Scripting . No Programming . No Plug-ins

Multiple Hypertext Links in a Single Billboard

Conjure Your Own Magic!

Download your FREE copy from www.cyactive.com

From zero to hero!

STUDENT WHIZZ KIDS MAKE MILLIONS WITH NET PORTAL

THE government may have abolished the student grant in recent years in favour of loans, but it hasn't stopped four undergraduates from hitting the big time and becoming the latest additions to Britain's growing batch of Internet millionaires.

In just under six months the four students – Peter Atalla, Michael Haycock, John Woodcock and Alan Edmonson – have gone from formulating a rough business plan in a Student Union bar to selling their Internet company, Student Net (**www.student-net.co.uk**) for £10 million.

The idea, thought up by 21-year-old Atalla, was to create a national student directory to accommodation, events, shops and, of course, student drinking. The spiralling success of the directory over the last few months led US firm IMPG to buy a 47 per cent interest in the business.

"I was looking for a new flat at the time and suddenly realised how useful it would be if information about accommodation available in the city was available on the Web" said Atalla, who admits he was surprised nobody had though of the idea before. Now 20,000 people are logging onto the site every week.

Campus dash for cash

But the Student Net gang are not the only students to make a killing through the Internet. Ben Cohen, a 17-year-old student from London, is poised to issue shares in his Jewish Net company, and 19-year-old Jimmy Norris who studies in Blackburn has made a 1000 per cent gain on his student loan after gambling it on Net stocks.

William Hague going cheap

MUCH maligned Tory leader William Hague may be interested to learn he faces less competition to purchase the domain name williamhague.co.uk than he will beating off Michael Portillo's challenge for party leadership.

According to registration specialists, Names123.Com (**www.names123.com**) the domain name is registered to a London man who has put it on the market at the bargain basement price of £99. This sum puts the market value of Hague's Internet currency a long way from that of Chancellor Gordon Brown. His name is currently on sale for a whopping £20,000.

"This is an unbelievably low price for a domain name" said Names123 MD John Sewell. "We've currently got 5,000 names for sale with reserve prices in excess of £60million, but this is one of the cheapest."

Other names up for sale on the site include BBC1.com and BBC2.com, both of which have a reserve price of £100,000. However, there is still a very long way to go before the $3million that was recently paid for Loans.Com in the US is equalled.

Find What You Want In One Visit

YOU LOVE BOOKS

Published Authors

Reviews
The best selection of books at the best price, all independently reviewed so you don't find yourself reading reviews written just to get you to buy!

Discussion
Book Forums - discuss what you're reading right now with other book lovers.

Fiction-Net

E-Publishing At Its Best
www.fiction-net.co.uk

YOU LOVE BOOKS

Unpublished Authors

Reviews
Check out the UK's hottest new talent - be the first to see the work of the future bestselling authors. The chance to get hold of their work right now.

Discussion
Think the new authors have what it takes? Talk about their work with other readers and with the authors themselves!

Fiction-Net

E-Publishing At Its Best
www.fiction-net.co.uk

<<< THE VINYL COUNTDOWN

VinylNet is an online music resource set up by drum and bass lovers who are obviously keen to preserve the glorious tradition of vinyl recordings. With all the latest news, features on artists an online shop and links to record labels, D&B fans will be kept more than happy. Head for www.vinyl-net.com to find out more.

Gates needs Windows cleaned

NEW OPERATING SYSTEM PLAGUED BY PROBLEMS

AS the computing world geared up for the launch of Microsoft's Windows 2000 operating system, events were overshadowed by media attention focusing on the new program's many problems.

With a wave of bad publicity in the run-up to its launch, it is unlikely the program's developers will have enjoyed the launch quite as much as those involved with Windows 95.

Of most damage were revelations in a leaked internal memo that suggested the new operating system contained no fewer than 63,000 different defects, including 28,000 bugs that could cause defects or problems. Although, in fairness, this figure was only to be expected with such a big project.

Counterfeiting has been another problem that the US software giants have faced. Central to the problem is that Windows 2000 has been bundled with many new computers since December. In addition, various Test and Beta versions of the program are in circulation, so there's high incidences of piracy.

To deal with the threat of these pirate copies, Microsoft is using a new program that works round the clock to ferret out pirated versions of the product. "It searches out these downloads and if it looks like there's a serious problem then we notify in rapid time the ISP," said the company's lawyer Anne Murphy.

Add these problems to the fact that not all firms will be able to make the smooth transition from Windows NT to 'Win2K' and unhelpful comments made by Dell's Michael Dell at a recent industry conference, and Bill Gates could be forgiven for feeling a touch depressed.

In a further insult to Gates, his ex-girlfriend Ann Winblad revealed he was a big fan of Macs and had always aspired to be a public speaker in the same league as Apple's Steve Jobs.

Live and online

BOTH Zöe Ball and Jamie Theakston are involved in a new Web site for their highly successful programme *The Priory Show*. Channel 4 bosses decided the once a week TV show was simply not enough to keep fans happy and launched the site to satisfy demand. Visitors to **www.theprioryshow.com** will be able view a guest list of forthcoming interviewees, read Zöe Ball's diary and enter competitions to win tickets for the show online.

Recent Net surveys

BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOUR INBOX

According to a recent survey, UK employees with Internet access now live in fear of 'Big Brother' bosses monitoring the contents of their work emails.

In research commissioned by Zoom, one of the UK's leading ISPs, it was found that 59 per cent of surveyed employees suspected employers were monitoring their emails, while a further 87 per cent now consciously avoid sending non-work related or personal messages from their work address.

These findings were echoed across the Atlantic by a recent US survey into employers habits where it was revealed that 27 per cent of companies stored and reviewed email messages.

SHOPPING HABITS UNCOVERED

A new survey from research firm Forrester claims to have identified four distinct types of European Net shopper. Pioneers are totally at ease with the Internet and shop all the time, Generation Nexts are recent users who shop but worry about prices, Future Buyers haven't purchased online yet due to security fears and Shopping Hold Outs claim they will never buy goods over the Internet. In total, it was found that four per cent of Europeans had shopped online and 90 per cent were willing to do so again.

Internet news in brief

FREE MP3 DOWNLOADS, WAP PHONES AND FREESERVE

- **Trendy UK underground dance label, Wall Of Sound, will release the new live album from Les Rhythmes Digitales exclusively on MP3. The album, *Live From Ancienne Belgique*, will be available to download from Crunch (www.crunch.co.uk) in the compressed audio file format. Two tracks will be available free, while the others will be priced at 99p each or at £6.99 for the whole album.**

- **Software developers Hypernix has launched the latest version of its popular freeware chat client Gooey in the UK. Version 2.1 allows users to meet their buddies face to face with its support for Microsoft's Net Meeting. There is also a search facility for lost contacts and the option to have multiple registered users. It's even reduced the installation file to just 1.1 Mb to speed up the download time.**

- **A new WAP phone from Siemens is being packaged with a unique service called Restaurant Finder. As the content war hots up for services that are specific to the WAP platform, Siemens hopes the service, which pinpoints the nearest restaurant, checks the menu and then make a booking online anywhere in the world, will prove to be a winner.**

- **Freeserve has announced plans to begin trials of a paid-for service. Apparently the service will be up to 20 times faster than normal links to the Web. The test service will be available to selected customers in London and Manchester using BT's high speed network and will cost users a fixed fee of £49.99 a month. Virgin Records and TV news company ITN will be among a number of companies providing information over the service.**

Startled at the cost of kit?
Don't buy or sell until you QXL
QXL.com online auctions
For trade enquiries email us at computer@qxl.com
www.qxl.com

more lolly

no subscription fee
to UKOnline means you'll
save around £12 per month
don't be a sucker

free call: **0800 053 0627**
we aim to get you online within 10 minutes

100% free internet service
all online calls charged at local call rates
www.ukonline.co.uk

UKonline

<<< SHARE AND SHARE ALIKE

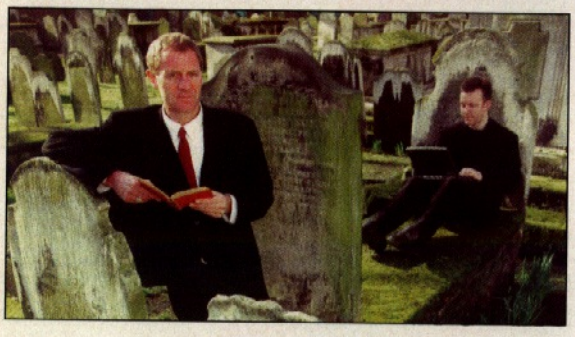
Sharepeople (www.sharepeople.com) is a London-based Internet broker which aims to offer potential investors a range of financial news, cash management and portfolio tools through its Web site. Those signing up can get a Sharepeople account, a high interest cheque book account courtesy of the Bank of Scotland and the ability to deal online.

The Net poets society

BRITISH TELECOM UNVEILS NATION'S FIRST E-POET LAUREATE

NOT content with finding a replacement for Ted Hughes in the form of new Poet Laureate Andrew Motion, Britain has also appointed an e-Poet Laureate in the form of 36-year-old Glaswegian Kyle MacRae.

In an initiative run by BT ISP Talk 21 to find a poet for the cyber generation, MacRae beat off stiff competition to emerge victorious with "The Coolest Den In Cyber Space" a eulogy to a teenager who creates his own world online by building a Web site.



"The Net is a natural and exiting outlet for poetry: at once intimate and large-scale and the e-Poet laureate competition is just one demonstration of this, as a very welcome one. The winning poem is a witty and energetic contribution to both the Net and poetry itself" commented Andrew Motion who selected the winning poem.

Below is the first verse of McRae's poem

At school this sport was all the rage –
To build from scratch the best Web page –
So Newton Smallbones scoured the Net
To see whatever he could get,
And though he didn't have permission,
This young schoolboy, on a mission,
Found and copied loads of stuff.
And when he'd gathered quite enough,
He pasted it with sheer delight
Into his own cool Cybersite.

It's rubber Jono

LISTENERS of Heart 106.2 FM may have caught a recent Webcast of DJ Jono Coleman dressed in bondage gear and posing in the window of Ann Summers.

Jono, who hosts the London station's breakfast show, performed the bizarre forfeit after losing a game of Battle Of The Sexes. The none-too-pretty results were broadcast on Heart's site – **www.heart1062.co.uk**

For more on Jono's stunt see FAQ on page 130.

Are you memorable on the web ?

Personalise your Website and Email

Your website address: www.yourname.inUK.com
Your email addresses: anything@yourname.inUK.com
Free Hosting with 10Mb webspace
Free Web-based Personal Organiser
Free Web-based Control Panel
Free Net Access (just for the hell of it!)
Options for FrontPage™ Extensions, Logs and more

[Over 1200 inUK.com domains now active !]

http://www.inUK.com

BACKCHAT

Got something to say about the magazine or the Net in general? Here's your chance... Email us at pi@paragon.co.uk, or send your letters the old-fashioned way to Practical Internet, Paragon Publishing, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH1 2JS

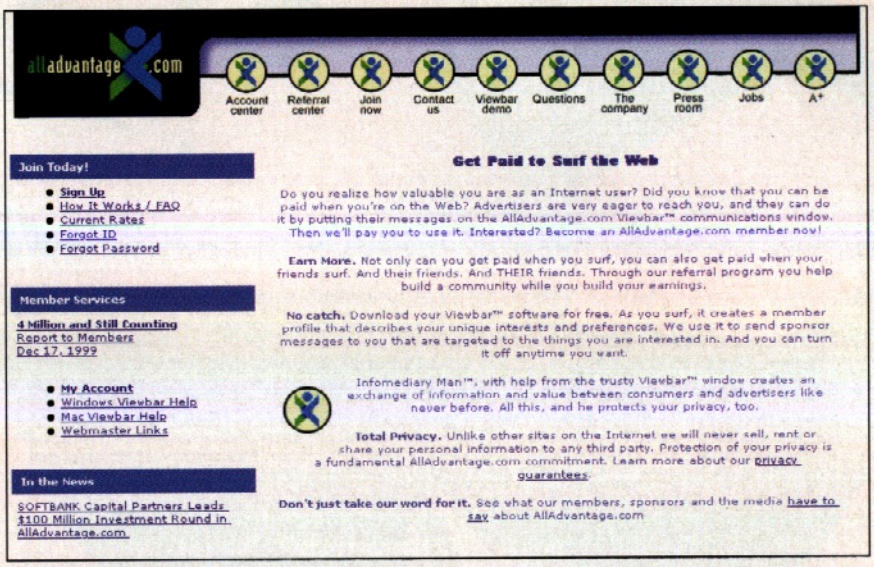
Can I really get paid to surf?

I've heard about an ISP called All Advantage which apparently pays its subscribers to surf the Internet. This sounds amazing! One of my friends even claims to have earned loads of money from them, but I'm a little suspicious about the whole idea.

How could such a service make money? Is it just a marketing scam, or is it worth considering?

Greg Richardson

*There are indeed several 'pay-as-you-surf' ISPs that give their subscribers money, depending on the amount of time they've used the Net. Of these, All Advantage (**www.alladvantage.com**) is one of the largest. It pays you 31p per hour, providing that you have its Viewbar ad banner displayed at the bottom of your screen when you're online. Ad revenue from these banners is how it earns money. Members are paid monthly by cheque when their accounts exceed $20 (about £12.50) and if you don't reach this amount, your total is carried forward to the next month. The feedback we've received has generally been favourable. Let us know how you get on.*



The type of Web browser you use should have no bearing on which ISP you sign up for. All ISPs should be compatible with either Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator.

LETTER OF THE MONTH

I'm angry about the five pence minimum call charge that BT telephone customers have to pay when accessing the Net. I know that five pence is only small change to most people, but when you think about it, it all adds up. The vast majority of UK Net users still connect via a local rate 0845 number.

This made me consider how much I am being charged on those occasions when I try to connect to the Net, but cannot for whatever reason. Only last week when I tried to connect, I could hear the modems doing the 'hand shaking' process and then mine got disconnected. This happened about seven times in the space of two minutes, so even those failed attempts to connect to the Net will presumably cost me at least 40 pence.

Still, if and when BT launches its new Surf Time package, we might not have to pay for all those dropped Internet connections. Personally, I think BT should reduce or cut altogether the call charges for all data calls.

Garry Povey

Yes, we'd agree. It's ridiculous that BT earns a minimum of five pence (4.2 pence + VAT) from Net users every time they dial up their ISP. What's more, you get charged for all those lost connections if the call was delivered correctly by BT. The only current solution is to use a freephone ISP like CallNet 0800 (www.callnet0800.co.uk) or Screaming.Net (www.screaming.net) which involve no phone charges whatsoever. If you can wait a while, then BT's Surf Time service will also provide Net access without extra call charges.

Every month, the best letter we receive wins a splendid ZoomCam Webcam (pictured above). The camera is ideal for all sorts of multimedia applications including video capture, video mail and videoconferencing. Available in USB, PPC or ISA versions, these cameras are perfect for bridging the gap between distant family, friends and colleagues.

Tesco troubles

I use Netscape Navigator as my browser and have just left TescoNet because, when I recently had a problem and called their Tech Help line, I was told they would not give me assistance because I was not using the default browser on their set-up disk – Internet Explorer. I pointed out to the operator that I had not set up my account using the disc, but had instead been talked through the configuration. This was to no avail. He would not help, so I left the service. I'm now with Totalise (**www.totalise.co.uk**) and have found the freephone helpline excellent and the operators very knowledgeable. Thank you, Totalise!

Jeremy Reynolds

A pat on the back...

Although I've been using computers for a few years now and the Net for the past two years, you always seem to come up with something new that makes life easier. I've been through the usual list of computing magazines over the years but having read *Practical Internet* for the first time recently, I must say how impressed I am with the content.

Chris Freeth

Thanks for your kind comments, Chris. Be sure to get next month's issue, out on April 6, to see our brand new design and even better content! There's a taster of what's to come on pages 40 and 41.

CAUGHT SHORT

Gazza's pal in PI?

It was with great interest that I read your article on using the Net on the move in PI issue 38, particularly since I intend to buy a laptop myself. One thing amused me – could the James Gardener from Tyne and Wear who was featured in your case study be a relation of Jimmy 'Five Bellies' Gardener, friend of wayward soccer idol Paul Gascoigne? **Dave Frimley**

No! You can rest assured, Dave, that there's no link between the two!

COMPETITION WINNERS

IS LADY LUCK ON YOUR SIDE?

CentreShop shopping sprees from issue 37 were won by Y Cawthorne (Cornwall), J Henshaw (Crewe), K Fraser (Canterbury), E Tubby (Apton) and C Hansbury (Widnes). The Databecker software winners were T Rimell (Sheppey), I Harrison (Romford), D Underwood (Herts), T Sinclair (Caithness), J Fairlie (Dundee), G Starr (Conwy), T Houghton (Portsmouth), J Edwards (Conwy), Y White (Torquay), R Walsh (Coventry), S Stubbs (Kent) and J Coverdale (Kent).

• **no** engaged tones or downtime • **unlimited** personal e-mail • **unlimited** personal web space
• **fastest** downloads on the planet • **no** subscription charges • **easy** website building tools
• **free** games servers • **domain** name registration • **free** mp3 music • **free** support

Madasafish

freedom for the net generation

Madasafish? What kind of a name's that for a free Internet Service Provider?

Well - it's different, funkier, faster and friendlier than any other ISP which contains the word free.
And we ain't a boring old supermarket chain either. Completely independent. We run our own network - with superfast connectivity. And our own support centre.

We know what you want from your ISP.
You want it free. Fast. With unlimited webspace, email, newsgroups. Free fast games servers. Free MP3 music to go. The full monty...

Madasafish
Fast, free ISP with attitude

And we know what you really really don't want.
You don't want downtime, engaged tones and a naff email address.

If you have any problems, don't panic, call **01851 777727** and one of our esteemed customer service agents will help you solve it right away. And don't worry - it's not a premium rate call (like some other "free" ISPs) just your telephone provider's normal charges...

So that's it then. It's Madasafish for you. You get everything you want - with no downtime and no engaged tones. And you get a Madasafish email address. Sorted.

for FREE internet access call **0800 0273373** or visit

www.madasafish.com for details

NETSHOPPING

The ultimate guide to spending money online

Get extreme!

AUCTION giant ebay has launched Extreme Sports zone, a forum for devotees of adventure sports to buy and sell specialist equipment on the Net.

Auction items include gear for snowboarding, skating, windsurfing, rock climbing and sailing among others. The site can be found at **www.ebay.co.uk**.

There's also advice from the experts about the best ways to buy and sell watersports and snowboarding equipment on ebay, what to say and how to attract buyers, along with tips on how to find the best bargains.

TOP OF THE SHOPS

THIS MONTH'S TOP TEN MOST VISITED STORES

		VISITORS THIS MONTH (MILLIONS) ▼
1	ebay www.ebay.com	7.47
2	Amazon www.amazon.com	7.37
3	Download.com www.download.com	4.71
4	Bluemountain.com www.bluemountain.com	4.61
5	CDnow www.cdnow.com	3.67
6	Cnet.com www.cnet.com	3.52
7	Map Quest www.mapquest.com	2.97
8	Freeshop.com www.freeshop.com	2.93
9	Ubid.com www.ubid.com	2.74
10	Barnes & Noble.com www.barnesandnoble.com	2.52

SOURCE: PC Data.com

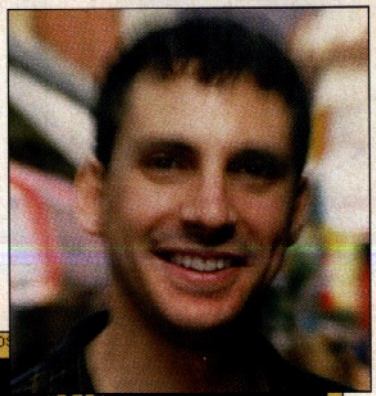
TEEN SPIRIT

THE chance of falling victim to online credit card fraudsters is small, but most Net shoppers are conscious of the threat when they spend money online. It becomes even more of a concern for parents who lend their credit card details to teenagers.

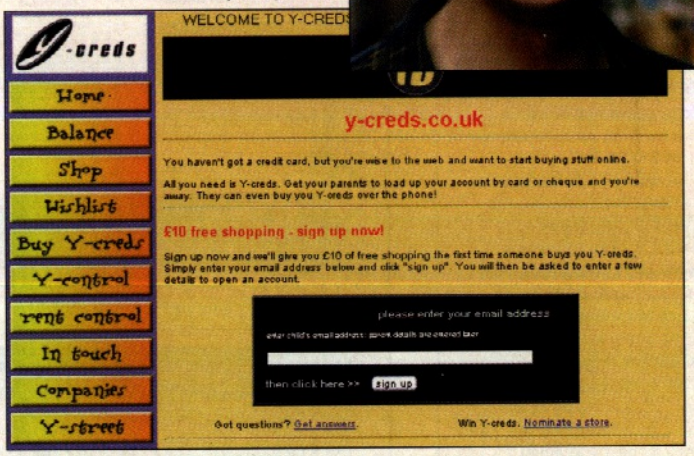
It's for this reason that the launch of Y-creds (**www.y-creds.co.uk**), a shopping system that lets under 18's buy online without the need for credit cards, is being welcomed. Parents and relatives can buy the special points, which work like book vouchers, then let their teens decide what they want to spend them on.

Y-creds are redeemable against a wide variety of products, ranging from CDs and videos to toys and computer games. Each credit is worth a penny and can be bought in units of 500, which would cost £5. They can be purchased online at the site or alternatively by calling **0845 100 9273**.

Kevin Sefton, boss of Y-cred, says: "Today's teens want to get online without the hassles of parent intervention and Y-creds allows them to do that, while reassuring parents that their children are only buying suitable merchandise."



Y-creds boss Kevin Sefton wants teens to be able to shop safely online



Gadget guru!

SEARCHING for a gift that shows you're a little wild and wacky? The Gadget Shop (**www.thegadgetshop.co.uk**) offers lava lamps, inflatable furniture, balancing wine bottle holders, plasma balls and even aliens in jars!

This online store aims to sell many of the products available in the 34 high street stores. Some 1,500 items are available.

The site also enables shoppers to enter dates, such as birthdays and anniversaries, which will flash on-screen as reminders of when presents need to be bought.

"Our site is different. We've thought very hard about how we can make it innovative in its marketplace. We also have a shop browsing search engine where people are presented with products in the same way as they might be in our stores," said a company spokesperson.

Jump out of bed onto the Web

EARLY morning hearthrobs Lorraine Kelly, Fiona Phillips and Eammon Holmes are tumbling out of their beds and onto the Web with the launch of GMTV's site.

Available at www.gmtv.co.uk, it boasts an online shopping mall and a travel booking service in addition to a mix of celebrity profiles, hot Hollywood gossip and lifestyle tips.

Created by Web design company Solaris, the site aims to pull in the viewers with insights into their favourite presenters' lives, plus information for healthy living.

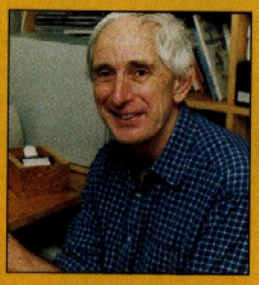
SHOP OF THE MONTH

EASY CAMP www.easycamp.com

IT'S that time of the year when your thoughts turn to summer holiday plans and sunny hotspots. And if you want to make the most of the great outdoors, why not consider a camping trip? Easycamp lists over 160 sites across Europe and lets you book and plan your trip, from your ferry crossing to the holiday insurance. It'll get you in the holiday mood!

SHOPAHOLICS

CATCH UP WITH THE LATEST IN YOUR ONLINE SHOPPING STORIES



Washing worries solved by the Web!

When most people need a new washing machine, they automatically think of high street stores like Comet or Curries – but John Dreadman turned to the Net instead.

A retired school teacher in his fifties from Cumbria, he visited the UK online electrical store Intersaver (**www.intersaver.co.uk**) and was impressed by what he found. With savings of up to £120 and a decent choice too, he was spoilt for choice.

Married with two children aged 18 and 16, he heard about Intersaver from the radio when its boss was being interviewed. "I was particularly impressed with his comments regarding security on the site and made a mental note to have a look," says John.

"Apart from the price and security, I really appreciated the level of service. I emailed the site for product information and got a reply very quickly. When I placed the order they called me to ask when would be a good time to deliver the machine.

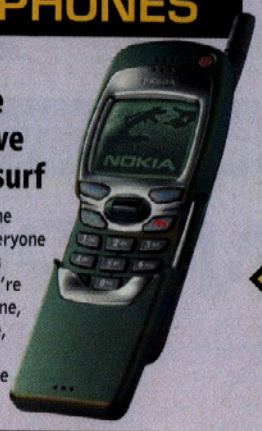
"I was very impressed with the whole thing. I did do some research into the prices and one company was prepared to match it, but when I requested product information I received very poor service."

John was so impressed with Intersaver that he now shops regularly on the Net. He's bought books, CDs and even a wood planer. And of course, his family are enjoying fresh clean clothes again!

Have you bought something online? Do you have a favourite shopping site? Send a picture of yourself with your story to pi@paragon.co.uk with the heading 'Shopaholics'

MOBILE PHONES

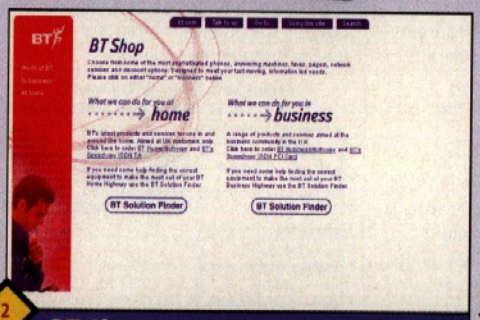
A look at the Internet's mobile phone shops prove that it's good to surf



The world seems to have gone mobile phone crazy, with everyone from schoolchildren to OAPs getting mobile. Whether you're replacing your worn-out phone, or want to buy your first one, the Net's as good a place as any to buy them. Here's some good sites to get started.

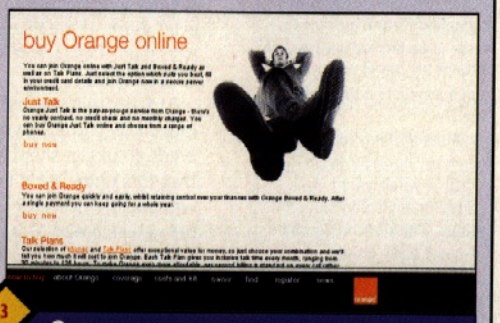
1 **Beyond 2000**
www.beyond-2000.co.uk

What lies beyond the year 2000? Nothing more exciting than a load of mobiles and pagers actually.



2 **BT Shop**
www.btshop.bt.com.

Tell you what BT, get rid of those awful ET adverts and we might just consider you!



3 **Orange**
www.orange.co.uk

The future's bright apparently, but not if the arty black and white interface here is anything to go by.

4 **Pocket Phone Shop**
www.pocketphoneshop.co.uk

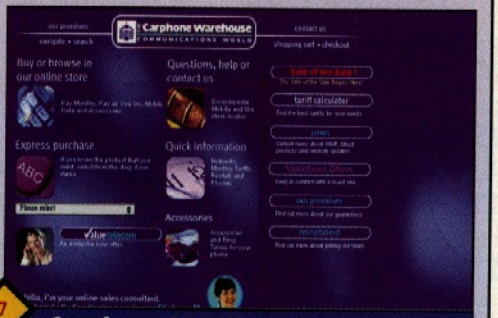
For teeny tiny phones that can fit in your pocket, the Pocket Phone Shop is the place to come.

5 **Vodafone**
www.vodafone-retail.co.uk

Buy your Vodafone over the Web and join one of the biggest names in the industry.

6 **One2One**
www.one2one.co.uk

Who would you rather have a One2One with, Ian Wright or Martin Luther King? Or neither?



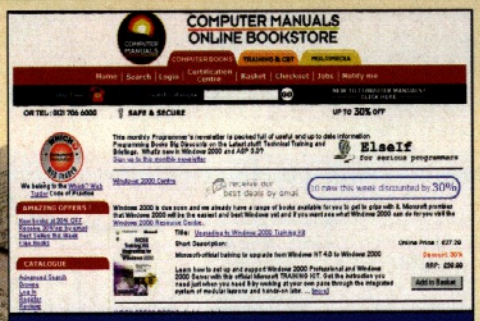
7 **Carphone Warehouse**
www.carphonewarehouse.co.uk

If you want some impartial advice, visit the Carphone Warehouse site.

BOOK SHOPS

There's far more to online bookshops than just Amazon and Waterstones...

IF you're hunting for some specialist information you go to the specialists right? Right. Which is why exploring the slightly more obscure bookshops on the Net can often be quite rewarding. Start off at these great sites, and then explore at will...



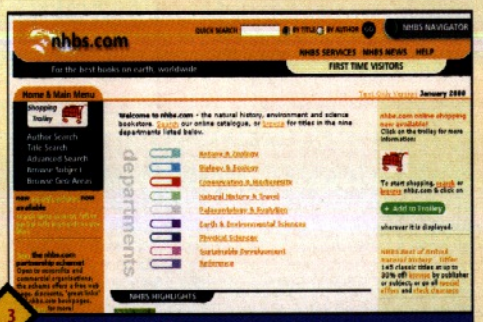
Computer Manuals
www.compman.co.uk

Solve all those operating system woes for good with a trip to this online computer books store.

2

Sports Pages
www.sportspages.co.uk

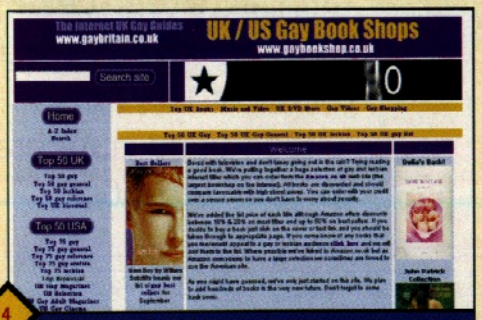
Get that elusive book on the history of Grimsby Town or Gazza's 1990 World Cup diary.



3

Natural History Bookshop
www.nhbs.co.uk

Those looking for life beyond Paul Gascoigne can browse and buy more esoteric books at NHBS.



4

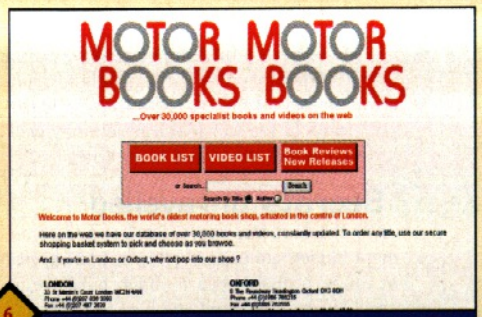
The Gay Bookshop
www.gaybookshop.co.uk

This is a very slick and well designed shop, with an excellent range of gay literature.

5

Magazines Direct
www.britishmagazines.com

Buy and subscribe to over 3,500 UK magazines. It even sells some rag called Practical Internet.



6

Motor Books
www.motorbooks.co.uk

Motoring maniacs had better pay this site a visit for hard to find and out of print car books

7

Zardoz Books
www.zardozbooks.co.uk

Zardoz looks for murder mystery classics and other rare or second-hand books.

OFF YOUR TROLLEY

GIVE YOUR CREDIT CARD A WORKOUT AT THESE NEW SITES

1

Sip 'n' surf

Ebooze (**www.ebooze.co.uk**) is to launch an online store in early April. It will offer over 4,000 wines, beers and spirits at prices reduced by up to 20 per cent on normal high street rates. It will also offer a 'booze miles' rewards scheme.

2

Premium paper

If you don't want to pay ridiculous prices for over-packaged and over-priced printer paper, try Paper Online (**www.paper-online.co.uk**) which boasts brands such as Epson, Hewlett Packard and Canon.

3

Watch out!

Claiming to offer 'a unique blend of technology, design and content', **www.faceforwatches.com** is a Flash-powered shopping site that boasts such timely brands as Spoon, AKA, Seiko and Independent.

4

Grab your wheels

Buy Range Rovers and Land Rovers at up to £13,000 cheaper than UK dealers by importing your car from abroad using Totalise Eurekar (**www.totalise.net**). The cars can be ordered online and are all right-hand drive vehicles.

Shhh! NET SECRETS REVEALED

The Net is both wide and deep, but at the same time it's all too easy to find yourself surfing the same familiar sites. Let **STEVE PATIENT** bring some of the Net's lesser used nuggets to your attention

So many places to go; so many things to do. No one can realistically try everything on the Net any more and some Net users find it all so overwhelming they act like those folk who drive out into the country for a picnic then sit in the car eating it rather than experience anything new.

Half the fun of the Net is exploring, so if you've been a bit leery of striking out into new territory this is the article for you. Here you'll find out how to experience some of the Net features you may well have heard about but never tried.

Secrets unravelled

Over the next few pages, we focus on some of those hidden online technologies and services that you've probably heard about, but have no idea how to use. We'll tell you how to take advantage of the best of them.

They include ISP giveaways, newsgroups, video conferencing, Web logs, Hotline instant messaging, Email to fax and back, Online file management, Net telephony and more. So read on, as we reveal the secrets of the Net...

ON THE CD Internet

You'll find most of the software mentioned in this feature on the cover CD

STAKE YOUR CLAIM FOR ISP FREEBIES!

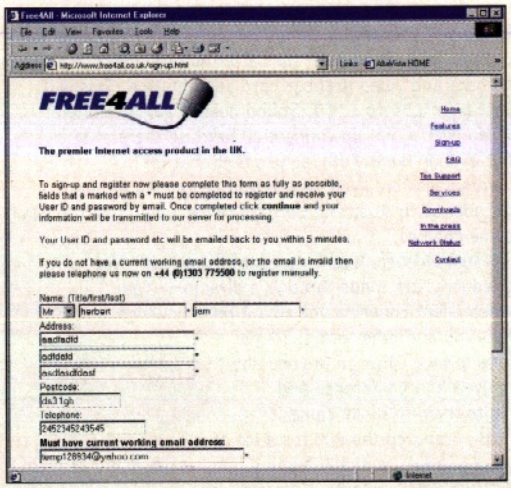
WHILE they're the biggest, Freeserve and AOL aren't the only Net access options. There are now over 400 free ISPs in the UK and many are well worth trying out. Sophisticated Net users know smaller free ISPs tend to be less busy, which often means faster Net access and less time spent waiting for Web pages to load. Another benefit is that smaller, newer ISPs will often offer extra services to try and attract custom. These can include free calls, like those offered by Strayduck (**www.strayduck.com**) where you get one week in three for free. If you want free money from your ISP, try Sharkhunt (**www.sharkhunt.com**) which offers 25p/hour online, Totalise (**www.totalise.net**) for free shares, Blue Carrots (**www.bluecarrots.com**) for more free stocks, and 4theNet (**www.4thenet.co.uk**) for regular cash payouts depending on the amount of time you spend online.

As well as faster connections and more freebies, you also get extra free Web space with almost every new ISP, along with more email addresses. You can use these as insurance for when your main account is unavailable or to create sites people won't associate you with. You can find a list of free ISPs at Net 4 Nowt (**www.net4nowt.co.uk**).

Treat the free Web space and spare email accounts as disposable. Use them with sites you aren't sure about. Give spare email addresses to software vendors, news services and so on without worrying about being swamped by spam. If it happens, just close the account and open a new one.

Don't forget 0800 ISPs either. Services like CallNet 0800 (**www.0800callnet.co.uk**) offer free calls if you can get on, but 0800 ISP services seem to be up and down like yo-yos. However, those offering 0800 access at weekends and evenings for a fixed monthly fee actually work.

Most free ISPs make it easy to sign up online without proof of identity. Use them whenever you don't want to compromise your real life. No doubt you'll find other uses for spare accounts yourself.



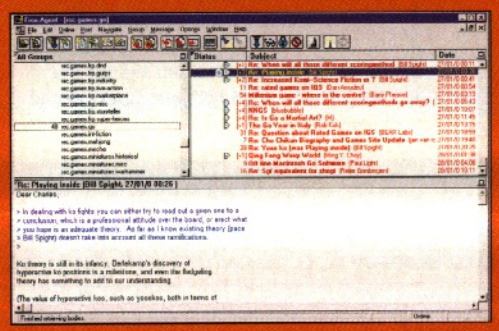
You can sign up as anyone with most free ISPs. If you need a temporary email address to join pick up a free one from Hotmail, or Yahoo, or both

NEWSGROUPS – ALIVE AND KICKING

NO one actually knows how many newsgroups there are in all, but many ISPs provide feeds to 30,000 or more. Newsgroups have an undeserved reputation for being haunted by perverts and madmen, but they tend to confine themselves to just a few dozen of the overall total and the rest are generally useful. Chat rooms and instant messaging are often seen as newsgroup replacements, but it isn't so. There are thousands of well moderated newsgroups which remain tightly on topic and attract intelligent users worldwide – chat rooms don't.

Like email, you post messages to a newsgroup. These are disseminated around the globe. It's a bit like sticking a letter to a wall in town where anyone interested can see it and stick up a reply. You'll get the reply next time you visit.

Moderated newsgroups are also a good place to find like minded people for projects of all kinds. Linus Torvalds, who wrote the Linux kernel, started the whole project with a posting to the minix newsgroup. One of the Net services which makes newsgroups even more useful is DejaNews (www.deja.com) which archives postings and enables you to search past postings. Check it out with a question on any subject you like. You'll be surprised by the level of interest and knowledge displayed by newsgroup users.



It helps that newsgroups are one of the easiest Net services to use. Outlook Express is fine, though there are dozens of excellent, dedicated newsreaders available on the Net. Anawave's Gravity is good and Free Agent is, well, free.

TOP TEN ISP OFFERS

TEN HOT ISP BARGAINS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

1. **Amlink**
   www.amlink.co.uk
   A massive 250MB of free space plus all the usual goodies including high speed ISDN access.
2. **Chocolate Internet**
   www.chocolateinternet.co.uk
   Get a bespoke email address and special offers. 17-inch monitors for £95 +VAT looks good to us.
3. **Club24**
   www.club24.co.uk
   This ISP concentrates on user interaction with chat rooms and a great selection of games – including Halflife and Quake.
4. **Dizzi**
   www.dizzi.net
   Dizzi pays you to surf (Surfshare) and pays you for incoming personal calls if you use the number it provides. Cheap calls and other telephony deals.
5. **Ecosse**
   www.ecosse.net
   No sign up required. Email accounts are private, though, plus Web space and Mac support.
6. **F.I.S**
   www.freeispshares.co.uk
   Neat offers include a mobile phone when you register a co.uk domain name, a personal Web portal with an online organiser, fax to email gateway and a free follow-me number.
7. **FreeNetName**
   www.freenetname.co.uk
   Register any currently unused domain name for nothing and use it for your free web space as well as email. Great for egoists.
8. **i12**
   www.i12.com
   Targetted at small businesses with CGI access to your Web space – which means your Web site can do anything!.
9. **UK2Net**
   http://uk2.net
   Amazing collection of the free and the cheap.
10. **UKU**
    www.uku.co.uk
    A free ISP but for £4.95 a month your Web site can use FrontPage extensions.

ONLINE VIDEO SEX IS POPULAR, PROBABLY BECAUSE IT'S THE SAFEST KIND AVAILABLE!

DON'T JUST SPEAK TO PALS: SEE 'EM!

THERE'S something a little magical about live video on your computer. OK, you've seen plenty of Webcams and streaming video from news sites and suchlike but personal video conferencing – with pictures of you – is much more interesting. Excellent video conferencing clients include VDOLive, NetMeeting and CU-SeeMe. We've explained how to use the latter in the walkthrough. To do it yourself you need a computer video camera. Either a parallel port camera or, for better quality video, a camera and video grabber card combination. This will cost from £50 to £100. Sound doesn't work well with video over a dial-up connection because there's simply not enough bandwidth, so use text chat for communication. Well, unless you're looking at your grandchild in Australia perhaps, when you'll want to hear some cooing.

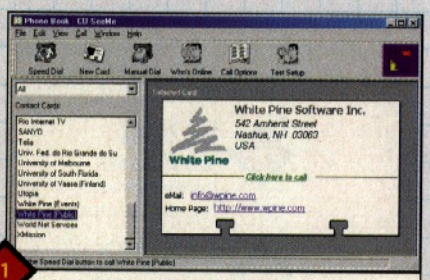
Most videoconferencing contacts, as with Net telephony, are made through a directory. Your video client connects you to a directory which lists you and other users. To get face to face Click on anyone not inolved in a conference and invite them to make contact.

Be prepared though, for a lot of sexually explicit activity. Video sex is popular, probably because it's the safest kind available. You can't catch diseases, don't need to make excuses to your partner, never get caught leaving sleazy premises by the paparazzi and you don't even have to buy a drink. You can get an importable list of CU-SeeMe reflector sites from **http://scanner.cuseeme.com** and get the free software from both our cover CD and **www.cu-seeme.net**.

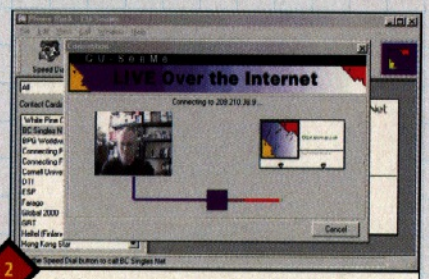
Videoconferencing software brings the Net alive with moving images!

HOW TO USE ONLINE VIDEO CONFERENCING WITH CU-SEEME

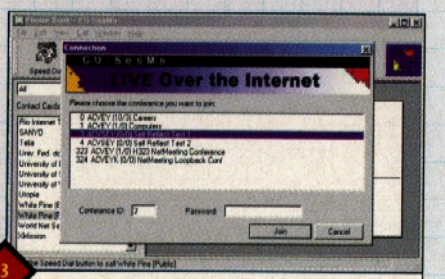
YOU CAN GET CU-SEEME FROM THIS MONTH'S COVER CD-ROM



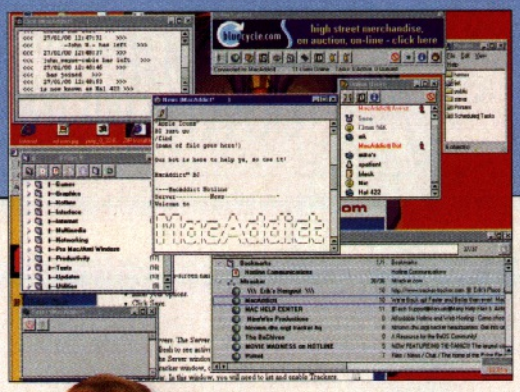
1 CU-SeeMe is available in free and commercial versions. It comes with a list of reflectors – basically places to meet other users – and you can add your own



2 Clicking on an entry results in CU-SeeMe trying to connect to it. This can take a few seconds. Not all reflectors run all the time



3 When you do connect you'll see often see a message followed by a list of available conferences. Conferences can be public or private (password protected)



HOT STUFF!

THE Instant Messaging world moves, well, instantly. New kid on the block is Hotline, free from www.bigredh.com. Easier to use than ICQ and with more features than AOL Instant Messenger, Hotline provides three basic services: chat, news and files. A Hotline server is used to provide them. There are already hundreds of Hotline servers, some public, some private, some secret. Each server has a unique set of the three basic services, so news on one is different from news on a second.

All you need to start is the Hotline client, install it, enter a name, choose an icon and connect to the default Hotline server. From there you can try out the features, meet people and look for servers reflecting your own interests.

You can set Hotline to accept or refuse private chats with others on the server and you can send private messages to other users.

The news feature works just like newsgroups. You can post messages, read messages and reply to messages. News messages persist when you log off, unlike chat messages.

Most servers also carry files and file exchange areas. You can't exchange files directly between individual users but on the plus side, uploaded files remain available for others.

Overall, Hotline is a drop dead simple messaging solution which combines flexibility, privacy (if required) and simplicity. It's also a hell of a lot of fun to use. For a list of Hotline servers and related goodies check out www.hotlinecentral.com/links.shtml.

WEBLOGS – WAY TO GO

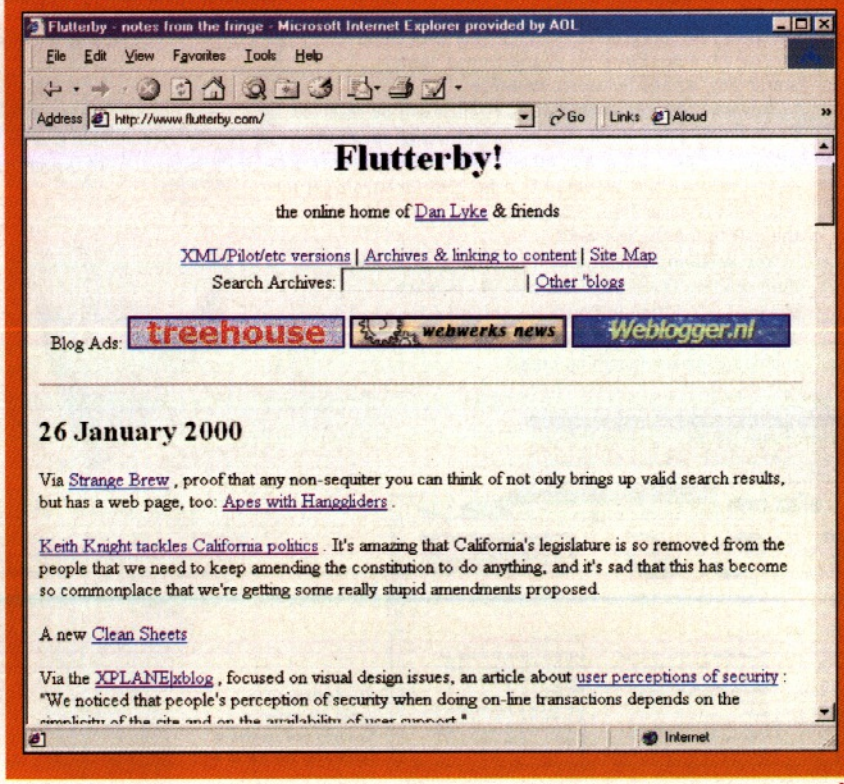
THE Web has become an intimidatingly large place. Search engines can no longer cope, your Favourites folder fills your hard drive, you've lists of Web rings and still you can't find what you really really want.

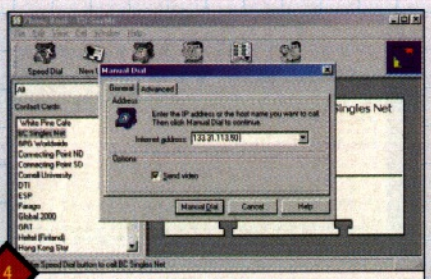
Think of the Net as an undiscovered country. A new frontier. Don't get lost, get a guide. This, ultimately, is the function of a Weblog. It's a special kind of guide. In a nutshell a Weblog is just a list of sites someone thinks worth the effort of linking to, but there are plenty out there.

The difference between a Weblog and a list of links is the attitude of the creator. The best Weblogs are created and maintained by hardy explorer types. The Weblog they maintain might be news related: technical, political, metaphysical or magical. It couldsimply be sites they found interesting, amusing, creative, useful or whatever. It can be themed or random.

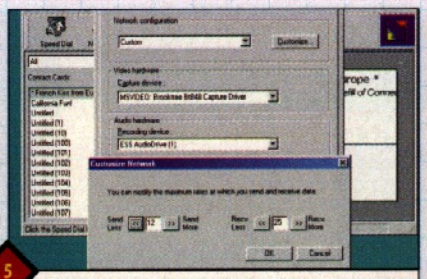
The idea is to find a Weblog created by someone with similar interests to yourself but by someone who has a lot more time to surf, or is perhaps just a lot more expert at it than you. In effect, you ride the coattails of the Weblog maintainer.

How do you find good Weblogs? Yet another tricky question. Fortunately, there are already meta-Weblogs maintained by Weblog critics to get you started. There's a good one at: http://dir.hotbot.lycos.com/Computers/Internet/WWW/Web_logs/





4 You can also enter addresses on the fly, manual dialing in CU-SeeMe jargon. These are usually supplied as IP addresses, but domain names also work



5 CU-SeeMe, is fussy about transmission rates though it makes a good guess based on connection type. Set them in your profile for better performance xxx xxxxxxx xxx xxx

6 Unlike some other video conferencing tools CU-SeeMe enables you to contact several people at once, as you can see herex xx xxxxx xxxx xxxxxxxxx xx xxxx xxxxxx

YOU CAN KEEP WORKING DOCUMENTS ON YOUR NET DRIVE AND ACCESS THEM FROM ANY MACHINE OR LOCATION

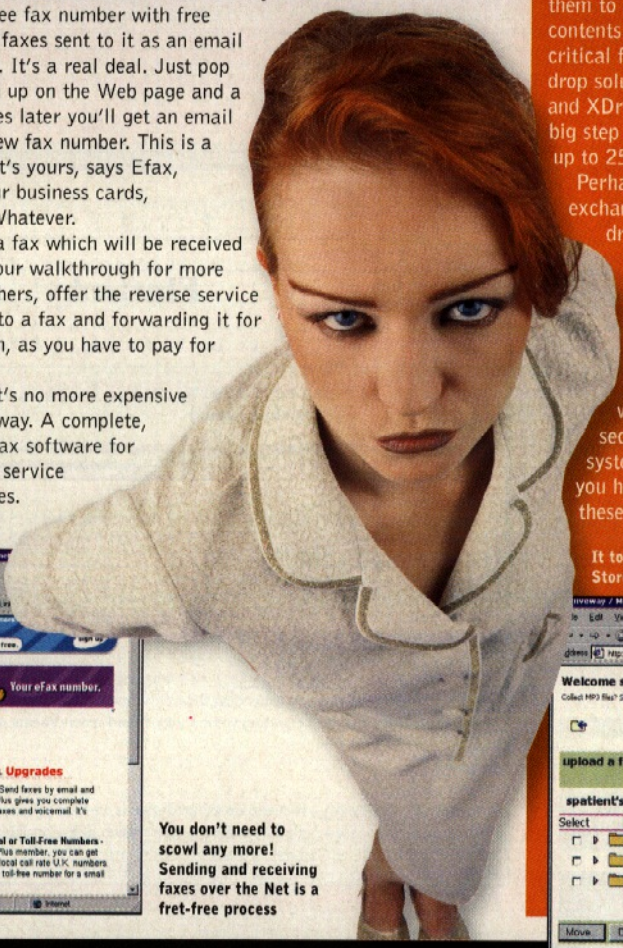
EMAIL TO FAX – AND BACK

YOU probably don't own a fax machine or a second line to dedicate to it and computer based fax software is a pain because it doesn't work when the machine is off.

Fortunately, the Net can handle all these problems for you. A number of companies now offer email to fax conversion and fax to email. Consider Efax (**www.efax.com**) which offers you a free fax number with free delivery of faxes sent to it as an email attachment. It's a real deal. Just pop along, sign up on the Web page and a few minutes later you'll get an email with your new fax number. This is a national rate 0870 number. It's yours, says Efax, forever for free. Put it on your business cards, stationery, email signature. Whatever.

Anyone can now send you a fax which will be received as an email attachment (see our walkthrough for more details on how). Efax, and others, offer the reverse service as well. Converting an email to a fax and forwarding it for you. This is never free, though, as you have to pay for the call to the fax machine.

You need an account, but it's no more expensive than sending faxes the usual way. A complete, cheap, fax solution is to use fax software for all your outgoing faxes and a service such as Efax for incoming ones.



You don't need to scowl any more! Sending and receiving faxes over the Net is a fret-free process

NAIL YOUR FILES DOWN ONLINE

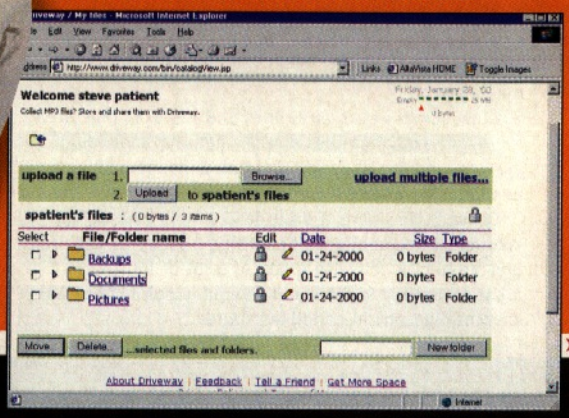
YOU'VE always been able to upload and download any old file from your personal Web space using FTP, but it can be a fuss and people don't tend to bother. Now, though, a number of companies have capitalised on the idea to create online back up services, document tracking and delivery services as well as file exchange points.

The best of them, such as I-Drive (**www.i-drive.com**) and FreeBack (**www.freeback.com**) provide Net utilities which make it easy. I-Drive enables you to create online folders in your file space, match them to a folder on your hard drive and synchronise the contents with one click for instant back up and restoration of critical files. Freeback integrates with Explorer for a drag and drop solution. Others are Docspace at **www.docspace.com** and XDrive at **www.xdrive.com**. I-Drive has just made the big step of providing unlimited stroage space, the others offer up to 25MB of space for free and some offer encryption.

Perhaps the neatest feature of these services is file exchange. You can keep working documents on your Net drive and access them from any machine or location. You can also give friends access to them if you make the folders shared.

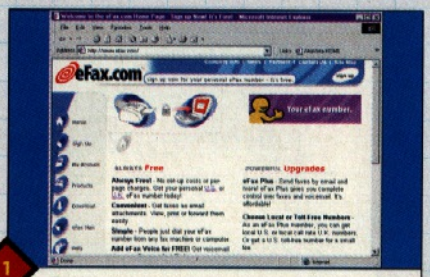
Some of these 'hard drive' packages go further by providing directory services. For example, if you type in a user name at I-Drive's Web site it will show you any shared folders the user has. Dead useful both ways. You can make files available without any security risk to your own system, without having your system turned on – without even being in the country. If you haven't got online backup and storage check out one of these services today.

It took just 30 seconds to sign up to Driveway (www.driveway.com). Store files on the Net and access them with a Web browser



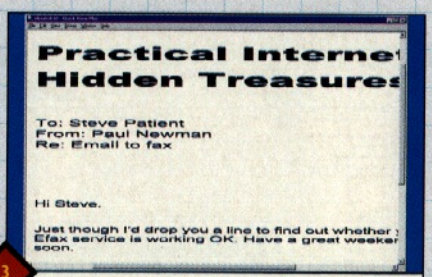
HOW TO USE FAX TO EMAIL

USE THE NET TO ITS FULL POTENTIAL BY USING IT TO SEND AND RECEIVE EMAILS



1 The first step is to sign up with one of the free fax to email services. This is Efax at www.efax.com. A few minutes later your fax number will arrive by email

2 Practical Internet's Paul Newman was naturally delighted to break off from his busy schedule to send a fax to the new number. It arrives as an email attachment



3 QuickView Plus is the program used here to check out data attachments. And here's the fax. If it had been sent portrait rather than landscape you could see it better

So,

what's your game?

NOT HEARD OF THESE?

SOME USEFUL SITES YOU'VE PROBABLY NOT USED BEFORE

I Want To Shop
www.iwanttoshop.com/shop main_uk.htm
A complete list of the UK's top online shops. From high street to obscure and back again, this is a great place to start window shopping.

Disgruntled Housewife
www.disgruntledhousewife.com
Ladies, there's nothing in the world quite as bad as trying to look after a man. If you need some light relief head for this surreal site.

Anonymizer
www.anonymizer.com
Surf anonymously by going via this Web site. It may be slower than using your browser, but it's great for secret practical jokes.

Ask The Toad
www.gfamilynet.com/askthetoad.html
If you're stuck and neither Jeeves nor Yahoo can help, you could always try asking the toad!

The Missing Sock Bureau
www.jagat.com/joel/socks.html
Where do they go? Nobody knows, but these guys offer a few answers to a problem that's troubled scholars since the dawn of Marks and Spencer.

The Alibi Agency
www.alibi.co.uk
There's only a problem with your cheating heart – when you get caught. Book an alibi and make sure your clothes never get cut to shreds again!

UK Speed Traps
www.ukspeedtraps.co.uk
We don't think this one needs any introduction, just drive safely kids and live longer. We know this site is just for speed trap spotters really.

Absurd
www.absurd.org
Exactly as the name suggests, this is one of the most absurd sites on the Net, which of course also makes it one of the more interesting.

Desktop Lawyer
www.desktoplawyer.net
Get a 'quicky divorce' from a nagging partner or sour spouse with this Net-savvy law site.

MAKE A CALL TO ANY OTHER NET TELEPHONY USER IN THE WORLD AT LOCAL CALL RATES

IDC's Net2Phone lets you call a phone from your PC for next to nothing. To make life even simpler it even looks like a phone

NET TELEPHONY

Make any call to any other Net telephony user in the world at local call rates – or for free if you're enjoying free calls to your ISP. With a 56K modem sound quality is usually better than on a mobile phone. You can also use text chat and whiteboarding (application sharing) as well.

You need a sound card, speakers, a good microphone and Net telephony software. Microsoft Netmeeting works fine though there are lots of others. In fact at Softseek (www.softseek.com) or Tucows (www.tucows.com) you'll find 20 or more. Among these are Mediaphone and Buddyphone, both of which are pictured below, and are well worth some close consideration.

However, Net telephony goes beyond computer to computer calls. Net2Phone (www.net2phone.com) offers a Net phone capable of connecting calls between computers and ordinary telephones or mobiles around the world. It also enables you to phone US 800 help numbers for free from anywhere in the world. Neat.

You have to pay for the service up front, by setting up an account, as with many other low cost call schemes. But you pay a fraction of the cost of normal long distance or international calls.

Pure Netphones are hugely popular in immigrant communities, among those with children at university or working abroad and people who simply like meeting new people – the type who used to be attracted by amateur radio. Even businesses now use it.

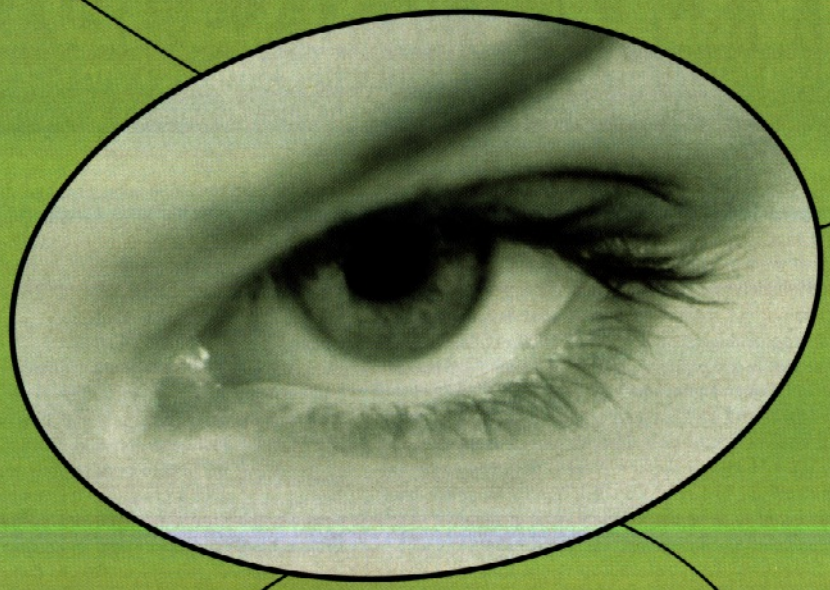
Net2phone sound quality, rarely as good as a real telephone, has gained acceptance with the growth in mobile phones. Business users no longer associate poor sound quality with being poor, just the opposite. So get one today.

Onwards ever onwards

THE Net gains new features every day. Trying these out is half the fun of the medium. Sometimes they're amusing, sometimes useful, but they're always interesting.

The Net treasures listed above are just a small sample of the activities you could be enjoying right now. OK, if you're relatively new to the Net some of these might seem a little technically daunting, but in practice, those who provide these services want you to use them. They make them pretty well foolproof.

As you gain in experience you'll become the guru, pointing folk at the best the Net has to offer. Take the first step today and discover just how much you've been missing.



just

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE PLAYING AT?

You should be playing online at the Zone.
Where you can have a round of golf with your brother in Germany, play chequers with a Czech, or just simply explore a new world with 2,000 other players in Age of Empires II. At the Zone you can play over 100 games, to suit all levels of expertise, with as many players as you like. With FREE* games, easy access and no lengthy registrations there's no excuse, so get online, now.

www.zone.msn.co.uk

Microsoft

*Telephone call charges and Internet connection charges apply. © 2000 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.
Microsoft and MSN are either trademarks or un-registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the US and/or other countries.

WEB WATCHDOG

Been ripped off by an ISP or an online shop and can't get a reply?
Let Practical Internet's trusty WEB WATCHDOG get some straight answers

A Digital River runs wild

I don't know if Web Watchdog can help me but on 4 October last year, I purchased Easy CD Creator Deluxe Version 4 from Digital River's Web site (**www.digitalriver.com**) using my Visa card. However, when I found out from a newsletter that this product was causing problems and lock-ups on people's systems, I cancelled my order the next day. Imagine my surprise on the 12th when the product arrived at my house. I emailed Digital River and explained the situation, they replied and we arranged a time for the item to be picked up. After three or four weeks, the product hadn't been picked up, so I emailed them again. This time they told me I had to send the product back at my own expense and that on receipt they would refund my £100. I emailed them back pointing out that the error was down to them and have not heard from them since. Please can you help or advise me as to what I can do to get my £100 back and this product collected.

Peter Carroll
Rudolfred3@aol.com prcuk@which.net

Web Watchdog got on the Digital River scent and received the following response from its spokeswoman, Jodi Baumann, "At Digital River Customer Services, we receive 4,000 contacts a day from people who need assistance in the ordering process and 96 per cent of the people who have purchased through our system have said they were satisfied and would purchase again. Yes, sometimes things happen and errors occur. When they do, we do our very best to rectify the situation. In this situation, we have called the customer and have implemented a mutually satisfying conclusion so that his product is picked up and he is reimbursed."

Result! We hope this has solved your problem, Peter.

All is now running smoothly for Peter now his problems with Digital River, below, have been sorted out

Beware of AOL hoaxers

I wonder if you get many complaints about letters like this one I've received from AOL. I have been on the Net for approximately two weeks and continue to receive requests for personal information. They don't seem to highlight the fact to new users that there are people out there trying to extort money from them. Here's the letter, which is signed by Steve Case, AOL's chairman:

"Dear AOL Member,
We are experiencing technical difficulties here at AOL and need our members to update their billing information. AOL's database has been having trouble with hackers just recently; due to this we would appreciate it for you to update your information. If you could please take a couple of moments in filling out the billing update form at: **www.aol.com/billupdate/secure.html** you would help in getting our database up and running. If you are unable to complete your billing information before January 31, 2000 we have no choice but to discontinue your account. We are sorry for the inconvenience and thank you for your time."

Rudolf Fred
Rudolfred3@aol.com

Watchdog spoke to AOL spokeswoman Sasha Chisolm who believes this is a hoax email. She says: "The letter received by Rudolfred3@aol.com requesting that he completes the online form to update his billing information was definitely not from AOL. This is an attempt by hackers to extract information from AOL members for their own use. Unfortunately, there are many scams and hoaxes in the online world, which is why each AOL member's inbox displays the wording "REMINDER: AOL staff will never ask for your password or billing information" at all times and we remind members not to reveal their password to ANYONE. We also recommend that members regularly use Keyword: security. Here they will find a whole host of information on how to spot and how to avoid such scams."

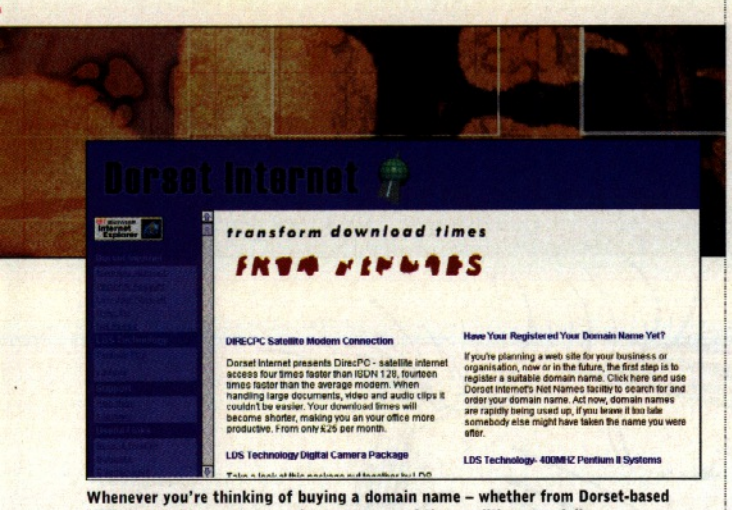
Hope that clears this one up for you, Rudolf. Security is always an important issue and sadly there are some unscrupulous people operating on the Net.

My domain name pain

I wonder if Web Watchdog can help me with a problem. Last July I bought three domain names from LDS Technology (**www.lds.co.uk**) at £60 for a co.uk name and £85 for a .com address, coming to £240 in total. I intended to begin development when I had enough money to host them. I recently acquired hosting from Plusnet, who I find both helpful and reasonably priced. When I contacted LDS to have them released to Plusnet, I was told the price paid was for them to hold the domains and if I required for them to be released, I would have to pay another £140 per domain. This was supposedly stated on their Web page, but I don't remember ever seeing this. I'm sure I would never have paid for these names if I had been aware of this condition. Please help, as I feel I've been 'done up like a kipper'.

Lee Gibson

Watchdog got in touch with Hants Unt, director of LDS, and asked him to have a look at the problem. This was his response: "Having checked our database again and indeed all domain name



Whenever you're thinking of buying a domain name – whether from Dorset-based LDS shown above or not – make sure you read the conditions carefully

registrations for this period, I find that we have never invoiced or have registrant details in the name of Lee Gibson. Our current policy is that we charge £60 for anything.uk and £85 for anything .com./.org/.net and this price includes all fees for two years but does not include VAT. We also offer free hosting and connection for domain names ordered from us. I would like to suggest that Mr Gibson contacts me directly to resolve any confusion."

It looks like there's been a bit of a mix-up on this one, Lee. We can only suggest you contact Hants directly and come back to us if you have any further problems.

CallNet conundrum

I subscribed to CallNet with no bother at all last night. I decided to try them after reading your interview with the company's boss in issue 36. I was about to set sail on their connection, when I had a doubt. I checked the connection number. Is it an 0800 number? No! It is in fact 0845, which I confirmed with BT is a local rate prefix. This is at best misleading and I am seriously considering making a complaint to Trading Standards about the way they are describing themselves. I feel that having given this outfit such a free advert in your magazine that it also falls on you to report the current situation – which is that this is not a free service.

Peter Watt.

Web Watchdog hunted down CallNet0800 spokesperson Chris Klopper who thanked us for bringing the matter to his attention. This was his reply:

"Mr Watt actually signed up for the business CallNet site which clearly states 'Calls to this 0845 service will be charged at local call rates'. Please see ***www.callnetuk.com*** *where you will see this highlighted with a red banner box at the very heart of the site. Naturally we would be delighted to sign up Mr Watt to the CallNet0800 service. If you can give us his address details we will forward an application form to him. Alternatively he can sign-up online at* ***www.callnet0800.com*** *or by phoning* ***0906 944 4040****."*

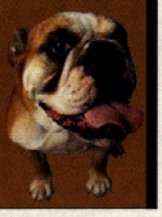
We hope this resolves any confusion Peter and we would be more than happy to forward your details to CallNet on your behalf.

- ***Callnet has now resumed it's registration service after clearing a large backlog of applications. If any other readers experience problems with this ISP please don't hesitate to contact Web Watchdog at the usual address.***

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM **YOU!**

HOW TO GET YOUR ONLINE GRIPES SORTED

HAVE you hit a problem with your Internet service provider, a Web site, software package or an online shopping service? Write to us at Web Watchdog, *Practical Internet*, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth, BH1 2JS, or send an email to watchdog@paragon.co.uk **– please note that we cannot guarantee to provide a reply to every letter received.**



KIDZ ON-LINE
FAST, FREE INTERNET ACCESS
Kidz!
"24/7 ACCESS TO THE INTERNET AND EDUCATIONAL CONTENT"
0800 Internet Access
FREE E-MAIL
FREE WEBSPACE
FREE SIGNUP
FREE NEWS
EDUCATION HELP
FREE MP3 DOWNLOADS
'INSTEAD OF PULLING YOUR HAIR OUT, PULL YOUR FINGER OUT AND GET ONTO THE NET.'
Free Internet Access
KIDZ WWW.FREE-KIDZ.CO.UK
Dogma Network
Webhosting, Virtual Internet & E-mail Solutions
company
The UK's Number#1 Internet Service Company
" We Can beat any quote on any E-Mail, VISP, WebHosting Solution in the UK."
ordering
For More Info, Visit
www.dogma-is.co.uk
#For a limited period, free .co.uk domains available.#
Telephone :0796-8085-160
website design
Website design
Telephone :0796-8085-160
www.dogma-webdesign.co.uk

ict.co.uk
overdose.co.uk
ww.internetaddiction.co.uk
www.antisocial.co.uk
www.cybersex.co.uk
www.clinic.co.uk
www.nofriends.co.uk
www.coldturkey.co.uk
I ♥ e-mails

Are you a net Junkie?

Addicted to cyber sex? Can't stop surfing? Feeling pangs of desperation when you're away from your email? **JO CHIPCHASE** lifts the lid on Net addiction and explains where to find help

Compulsive behaviour has been with us since the earliest times. Ever since Adam bit into the apple, we haven't been able to resist temptation. Society has seen the whole gamut of addictive behaviour from opium dens to absinthe, casinos to brothels, nicotine to cocaine. Nowadays, a new addiction is threatening the fabric of society and engulfing the lives of thousands of vulnerable people. While the stereotypical addict was once characterised by a used syringe, today the favoured paraphernalia is a PC, a modem and a phone line. Welcome to the world of the Internet addict.

Gawking out

Let's face it, we can all be accused of 'spending too long online'. Yours truly has received numerous accusations of "sitting all day at the PC, stumbling out of the computer room, gawking for a while and passing out after two glasses of wine" (at least I have the excuse of doing it for a living). However, a bit of gawking is nothing in comparison to the true Net addict – a sad and socially dysfunctional creature who inhabits the darkest corners of chat rooms, porn sites and other morally reprehensible resources, in the hope of finding a strange satisfaction in cyberspace.

According to the Center for On-Line Addiction (**http://netaddiction.com**), Internet Addiction (IA) is "a broad term covering a wide variety of behaviours and impulse-control problems". Common varieties of IA include: Cybersexual Addiction (where you can't leave online sleaze alone), Cyber-relationship Addiction (where your cyber pals replace real-life friends and family), Net Compulsions (online gambling) and Information Overload (compulsive Web surfing and ➤

THE RISE OF **NET ADDICTION**

IN JUST SIX SHORT YEARS, WE HAVE WITNESSED HOW NET ADDICTION HAS TAKEN HOLD OF OUR VERY SOULS. WELL, SOMETHING LIKE THAT

1994

November 1994 USA

Dr Kimberley Young starts researching Net addiction in newsgroups after a friend's marriage breaks up because her hubby was spending 10 hours a night surfing.

1996

1996 – Texas USA

A 17-year-old boy shudders and convulses in a drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre, going cold turkey over his withdrawal from the Internet.

1996

Summer 1996 USA

The American Psychological Association conference features an academic survey about online addiction. Of 496 heavy Internet users, 396 were found to qualify as addicts.

1999

August 1996 Boston, USA

McLean Hospital, a psychiatric hospital affiliated with Harvard, USA, opens a computer addiction clinic.

1999

Early 1999 USA

Dr Kimberley Young opens the first online clinic for Internet addicts.

1999

September 1999 UK

The Student British Medical Journal issues a list of criteria to help GPs diagnose Net addicts.

1999

October 1999

Software firm, Visionary2000, launches anti-addiction software called Getalife. When installed, the software flashes unsympathetic messages at afflicted users, to try and encourage them to do something else instead.

THE NET BECOMES THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN YOUR LIFE TO THE DETRIMENT OF EVERYTHING ELSE.

database delving). Recognise your symptoms? You can receive counselling at Netaddiction.com's virtual clinic for $15 a session.

Not just a guy thing...

So, exactly who are the main victims? Mark Griffiths, a psychologist at Nottingham Trent University, surmised during 1996 that "the typical addict is a teenager, usually male, with little or no social life and little or no self-confidence." However, research conducted by Helen Petrie of the University of Hertfordshire's Psychology Department during 1998, suggests that Internet addicts are equally likely to be female as male and they actually have an average age that's close to 30 – so no-one is safe. The long-term effects of Net addiction are depression, introversion, and an astronomical phone bill (a biggie from BT is enough to depress the best of us, although 24-hour 0800 Net access could stamp this out altogether). However, as Griffiths points out, real addiction is only when the Net becomes the most important thing in your life, to the detriment of everything else.

Cary Cooper, a psychologist at UMIST (University of Science and Technology in Manchester) agrees that Net addiction is becoming a very real problem in the UK. He says: "The Internet is absorbing, and addiction must be avoided like the plague. The people who are addicted won't realise there's a problem – rather it's the people around them who'll see that they're spending an inordinate amount of time online. People need to control their usage by having an entrance or exit time, and they must not exclude real people and real relationships. False personas and chat rooms are a problem – there's too much engagement of people with this sort of thing."

Cyber chat, cyber sex

In the States, where the lucky buggers have had flat rate access for absolutely ages, there is certainly a tendency for sad, lonely individuals to sit in chat rooms for hours on end, talking pap to other Internet addicts. In the UK, some people do exactly this despite the large bills. One of the most popular topics in chat rooms is sex, and people can easily step on to the slippery slope of cybersleaze.

While any sane person would agree that jumping on a warm body with reckless abandonment beats playing with a cold machine, the Net addict doesn't agree for a nanosecond. The addict will stop at nothing to seek seedy thrills in chat rooms and online porn sites. According to the ACE (Accessibility, Control,

Addicted to chat

GUY and John are flatmates in Brighton. Although the pair usually get on okay, sharing many leisure and work pastimes. John's Internet chat habit has put strain on the relationship – not to mention the phone bill.

Says Guy: "John spends long hours in chat rooms trying to find people who share his interests, and who might like to meet up with him. Even when he goes to other people's houses, he gets straight on the Net to cruise his favourite chat rooms. Sometimes, people get annoyed – especially if they're trying to do their work. I can think of one example where he would let someone on to their own machine to print a document. It's really hard to drag him away. When we had a phone line in our flat, it got disconnected because John kept falling asleep at the keyboard without logging off the Net."

What does John think of these criticisms? "I think Guy is out of order. It's not as if he doesn't spend hours online. I will choose not to mention some of the sites he downloads pictures from... he starts looking at all sorts of stuff if you leave him alone for a minute."

5 steps to becoming a Net Addict

Get out less

IT'S NOT ALL THAT DIFFICULT TO BECOME A NET JUNKIE. JUST FOLLOW OUR SIMPLE FIVE-POINT GUIDE TO ATTAIN A CYBER-COMPULSION PROBLEM

TO be a successful Internet addict, you need to avoid leaving the house. Your friends might impede the process with irritating questions that distract your attention from surfing. For example: "Do you fancy coming to the pub?" Don't worry – you can easily discourage their invitations with an answer along the lines of: "After I've finished upgrading my Internet Relay Chat client, I'm staying in to play in a Multi User Dungeon with my friends, Silver Dragon, Warthog and Death Girl." Remember: the Internet is less socially challenging than the pub, and no-one can ask you to buy a round. Get your friends to collect menus from the local pizza delivery emporium, so you don't have to go out if you're hungry.

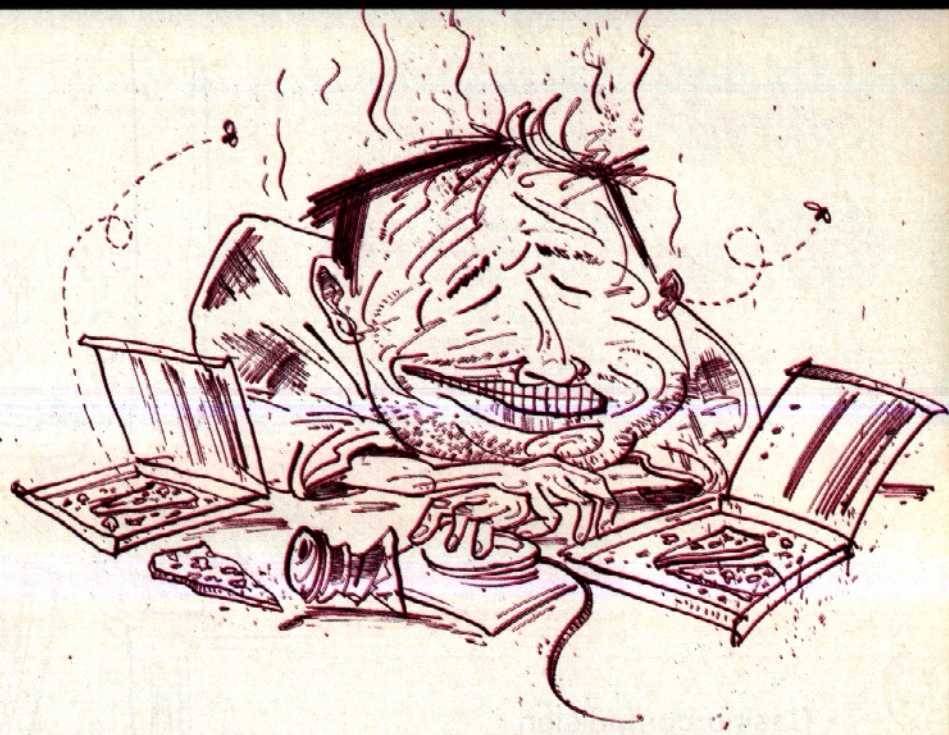
Chat trick

ARE people in chat rooms aware of Net addiction? Are they even interested? Can they help a person with a problem? A visit to Yahoo! Chat, under the moniker of "Chairboundbutt", suggests not.

I start off in the 'Surfing The Web' room, where everyone ignores me. The people in the room are too busy discussing ISPs and sex. I subsequently head to the 'UK Health Care' room, only to discover that it's empty. The 'Support and Recovery' room looks promising, so I enter and type: "Can anyone help me? My friends keep telling me I'm addicted to Internet chat." Someone going by the name of Brown Sugarbear offers to send me a helpful URL, while someone else invites me into a room called 'Men Sucking Men'. Suddenly, the Support and Recovery room fills with dozens of gay men. I leave, and head to the over-30s community room (surely this lot will have some sense?). No...

5 steps to becoming a NET ADDICT

IT'S NOT ALL THAT DIFFICULT TO BECOME A NET JUNKIE. JUST FOLLOW OUR SIMPLE FIVE-POINT GUIDE TO ATTAIN A CYBER-COMPULSION PROBLEM



DEVELOP ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

IT'S time to further your habit. Spend all day and night at your PC and ignore your family and **friends completely, acknowledging** anyone's presence only with a **grunt. Consider locking yourself in** the computer room. Do not pay **attention to your personal hygiene** – there is no need to apply **deodorant or change your clothes** (unless absolutely necessary). Surround yourself with empty pizza delivery boxes and lots of coke cans.

Excitement) Model of Cybersexual Addiction, the anonymity and convenience of cyber porn make it an attractive option for those seeking easily available – and perhaps extra-curricular – sexual activity without getting caught by people who would disapprove. This makes it a great way to avoid all those pesky family members or partners. Whatever your sexual preference, no matter how bizarre (pass that enema kit, please), you'll find something to get you going.

For the cybersex addict, there's no need to invest time and money cruising for sexual partners in bars and clubs, with the risk that naff chat up lines will result in a slapped face. Furthermore in cybersex circles, the size of your equipment needn't be a prime concern, and no-one will mind if it suddenly goes off. In an adult chat room, the speccy, weeny Net addict can portray himself as a major stud, and no-one will be able to tell any difference. As a writer in this very publication (naming no names) said last year: "An awful lot of online chat is devoted to sex. It seems that there are a lot of people who prefer talking about it to doing it – and who can blame them? It's safer, cleaner and a lot less effort. It can be fun, too." Well, each to their own. Just don't forget your screen wipes and remember that sticky keys aren't a standard feature of Windows98.

I'm ignored again. Heading closer to home, I enter the 'London Locals' room, where the topic of conversation is about a "shrivelled thing" (any guesses?). I type: "I'm from Brighton and I'm addicted to online chat. Can anyone give me some advice?" Two of the fellow chatters immediately reply "I'm addicted to sex" and "I'm addicted to picnics". Someone provides a URL where I can get free local phone calls. "I can't pay my bill," I say. "Don't pay it then," says a chatter called Nonopoubelle. "An expensive lesson," says someone else." I go on to discuss my hygiene problems (sweat, empty pizza boxes). Eventually, someone tells me to get a life. I claim to have a predilection for cybersex, and the chat room inhabitants immediately assume I'm a bloke. The room soon starts to empty... maybe it's because I told everyone I smell? I depart.

5 steps to becoming a NET ADDICT

IT'S NOT ALL THAT DIFFICULT TO BECOME A NET JUNKIE. JUST FOLLOW OUR SIMPLE FIVE-POINT GUIDE TO ATTAIN A CYBER-COMPULSION PROBLEM

GET INTO CYBERSEX

FEEL the sexy undulations of the natural keyboard, the satisfying thrust (cue heavy breathing) of your hard drive... the way your engorged modem bucks towards the pulsing entrance... of yet another cyberporn site. Your credit card twitches uncontrollably as the exit trap clinches tightly round your browser and the banner ads convulse towards you in a fantastic, frenzied tangle of limbs and open, wide, vacuous, gif-animated mouths...

5 steps to becoming a NET ADDICT

GAMBLING ADDICTS HAVE NUMEROUS OUTLETS FOR SQUANDERING THE FAMILY NEST EGG, WITHOUT EVEN HAVING TO LEAVE THEIR SEATS.

Try to conceal your habit

IT'S NOT ALL THAT DIFFICULT TO BECOME A NET JUNKIE. JUST FOLLOW OUR SIMPLE FIVE-POINT GUIDE TO ATTAIN A CYBER-COMPULSION PROBLEM

UNFORTUNATELY, while most real addicts tend to become furtive, a drugs habit is easier to hide than a surfing habit. While it's pretty straightforward to conceal Bolivian marching powder in a safe, dry place (your underwear drawer is ideal), it's not so easy to conceal your compulsive surfing habit. What to do? Hide your PC and yourself in the wardrobe? But you've still got the massive phone bill to contend with... and no, it's no good hiding that in your drawers... not unless you want a visit from Mr Bailiff and his close friend, Local Constable. On the other hand, the Internet doesn't damage your nostrils, make you refer to social acquaintances as 'man', or encourage you to grow a dodgy goatee beard.

Casino compulsion

Sex is not the only vice which can afflict the Net addict. Gambling is a mug's game, so they say – and this applies on the Net, as well as down at your local bookmakers. Netaddiction.com reports a rise in compulsive online gambling, auction activities and online trading, attributing the problem to the popularity of auction houses, virtual casinos and online brokerage houses which are open round the clock. Gambling addicts have more than enough outlets for squandering the family nest egg, without even having to leave their seats. For the aspiring self-helper who wants to cure their vice, it doesn't help that a search for 'online gambling addiction' on the popular Northernlight search engine (**www.northernlight.com**) throws up the results "internet roulette, slot machines, jackpot, winning story, betting line, strip poker, las vegas, jackpot winner", followed by "Gambling addiction – how to play slot". During September 1999, the *Baltimore Sun*, a Washington based paper, reported that some Web sites are luring people to "wager their way into disastrous debt", and the Internet is widely seen as exacerbating gambling addiction. However, many people would say that setting up an Internet venture is a big gamble, yet numerous Net addicts have made millions out of that during the past year (on paper, at least).

Cold turkey?

So... you think you've got a problem? Just can't cut the connection, unhand the mouse and close that Web site down? The news isn't all bad. According to cyber addiction experts, the solution is not to chop the modem wire and throw away your PC, going cold turkey on your addiction. As with controlling alcohol and drug usage (unless you're a hopeless old sot with a major abuse tendency), moderation is the key, as opposed to total abstinence. So, try to see the Internet as a productive tool, rather than a play thing...

...yeah, right!

5 steps to becoming a NET ADDICT

IT'S NOT ALL THAT DIFFICULT TO BECOME A NET JUNKIE. JUST FOLLOW OUR SIMPLE FIVE-POINT GUIDE TO ATTAIN A CYBER-COMPULSION PROBLEM

The Kinyard test

Not convinced you're a bona fide addict yet? Try the handy test at the Net Addiction Clinic (**www.webwriter.co.uk/netaddict**) to assess the scale of your cyber compulsion. It's not quite Betty Ford, but what the hell?

Four Great Offers for all PC users

are you on? supanet

Use your PC to help yourself and your school to these great offers. All you have to do is simply register with and use supanet Free Internet service and claim these offers.

1 supanet FREE Internet Access

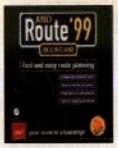
FREE INTERNET ACCESS supanet

supanet is one of the fastest FREE Internet Service Providers and now provides FREE supanet installation support in addition to UNLIMITED free access to the Internet. You get 20Mb for your own website, plus multiple e-mail addresses for your family and many other facilities. And now you get local rate phone charges from as little as 1p per minute.

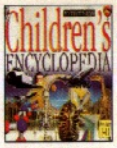
FREE SOFTWARE SCHOOLS

2 FREE software for home

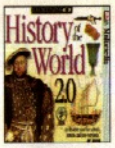
Choose one from a list of 29 best titles selected from the Software for Schools home list including any of these below. This software will be posted to you.



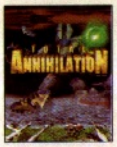
ANDRoute 99 Route Planner



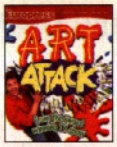
DK Eyewitness Children's Encyclopedia



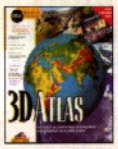
DK History of the World 2.0



Total Annihilation Game



Art Attack – Creativity



Compton's 3D World Atlas

Powerslide Racing Game

...plus many more titles to choose from.

3 Win one of 1000 Home PCs

supanet has teamed up with Time Computers to offer 1000 PC prizes for users of supanet. Up to 50 PC winners will be announced every week for the first 5 months of the year 2000. Full details on the supanet website.

4 Help your school to be a supaschool

When you register and use supanet, you can nominate your local schools to benefit from the massive supaschool promotion.

- Up to 30,000 computers for schools.
- A **FREE PC** for every school.
- Up to £100,000 of IT equipment for each winning supaschool.

Each nomination has great value to your school.

- With 9 nominations your school can get a **FREE colour printer**.
- With 99 nominations your school can get a **FREE Time Education PC**.
- With 29 nominations your school becomes eligible for consideration for supaschool status, allowing it to claim up to £100,000 of IT equipment.

Three Ways To Register

A – **Existing Internet users.** Simply go to the site **www.supanet.com** and click on the sign-up button. (Applies if you have Internet Explorer 4.0 or higher). You'll still be able to access your favourite sites, existing e-mail accounts and other content from most ISPs.

B – Pick up a supanet CD from any branch of Time Computers, Courts, Powerhouse, Choices Video or the PocketPhone Shop. Simply follow the instructions on the CD.

C – You can also get a **FREE CD** by calling **Freephone 0800 915 9115** and we will post you a supanet CD.

FREE INTERNET ACCESS supanet

The fast free Internet service with FREE supanet support

are you on? supanet

TIME COMPUTERS | POWERHOUSE | the PocketPhone Shop | choices VIDEO | COURTS | TIME education

See www.supanet.com website for full details and terms and conditions of PC competition and supaschools promotion. This offer is valid for new supanet registrations after the 10th of January 2000. Offer limited to one free software title per household. Software supplied on CDs with on-line documentation. Pack shots shown for illustration only. Please allow 28 days for delivery. Calls charged by your telecom provider, local rate for Internet, national rate for support. supanet Ltd. The Globe Centre, St. James Square, Accrington, Lancs. BB5 ORE.

SP2+

FREE! FULL £100 VERSION OF HOTMETAL PRO 4 ON THE CD PLUS! TUTORIAL BOOKLET

ISSUE 40 EASTER £3.99

Practical internet

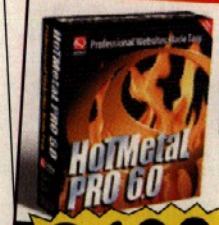
YOUR HANDS-ON GUIDE TO THE NET

WHO WANTS TO BE A NET MILLIONAIRE

How to turn a **great idea** into an online **money-spinner** – where to get **financial** backing, how to **promote** it, and **cash** in!

NEW LOOK!

THE Practical GUIDE FREE WITH ISSUE 40



HoTMetaL Pro 4

The fully working £100 version of HoTMetaL Pro 4 on your CD-ROM

£100 RRP

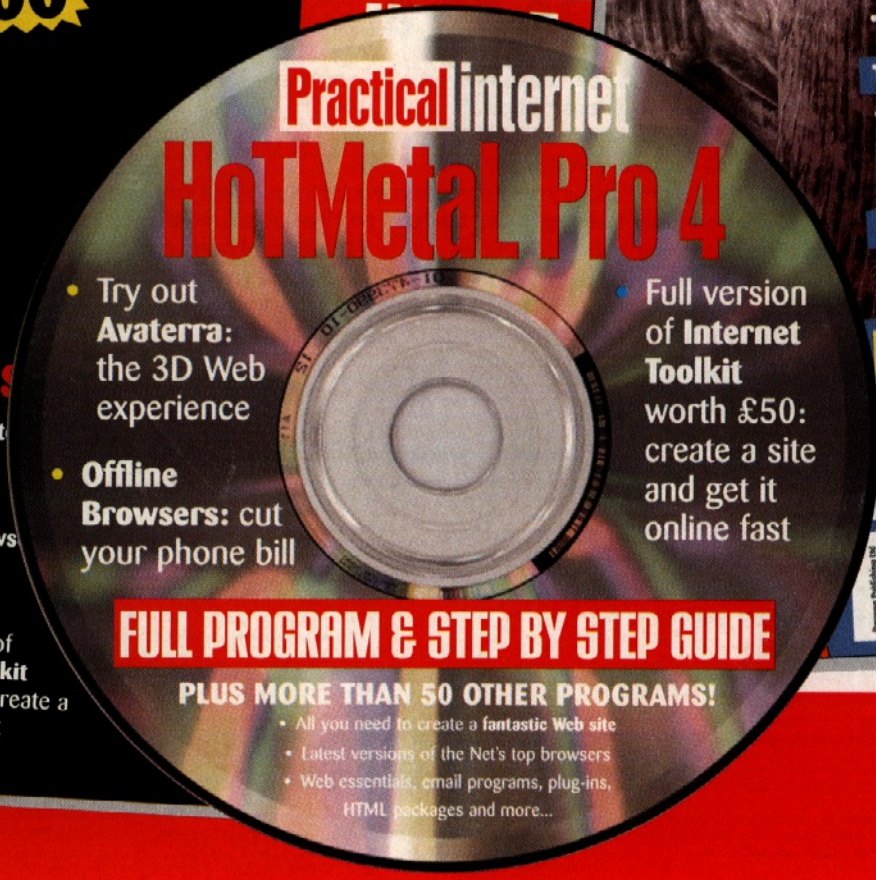
TUTORIALS PG80
- Flash 4: create an animated site
- FreeNetName: grab a free UK domain
- Cryonics: build a 3D Web site

TESTED PG90
- Nokia 7110 WAP ready phone
- Casio QV-5500SX digital camera
- LG MP3 Portable MP3 player

HEAD TO HEAD PG100
- Bun.com, Screaming.Net, Virgin, CallNet 0800, Totalise

PLUS! OFFLINE BROWSING cut your phone bill!

NEW! WINDOWS 2000: WHAT DOES IT OFFER NET USERS?



QUICK S

- Try out Avat the 3D web experience
- Offline Brows cut your phone bill
- Full version of Internet Toolkit worth £50: create a site and get it online fast

9 771366 766022 38

GET THE ALL-NEW

Practical internet

YOUR HANDS-ON GUIDE TO USING THE NET

EVEN BETTER CONTENT AND FANTASTIC SOFTWARE GIVEAWAYS!

Your favourite Internet magazine gets an exciting new look from next issue with an even easier to read design and more of the jargon-free news, features and advice you like so much.

With more step-by-step tutorials and 'how to' articles than ever before, Practical Internet will become even more practical!

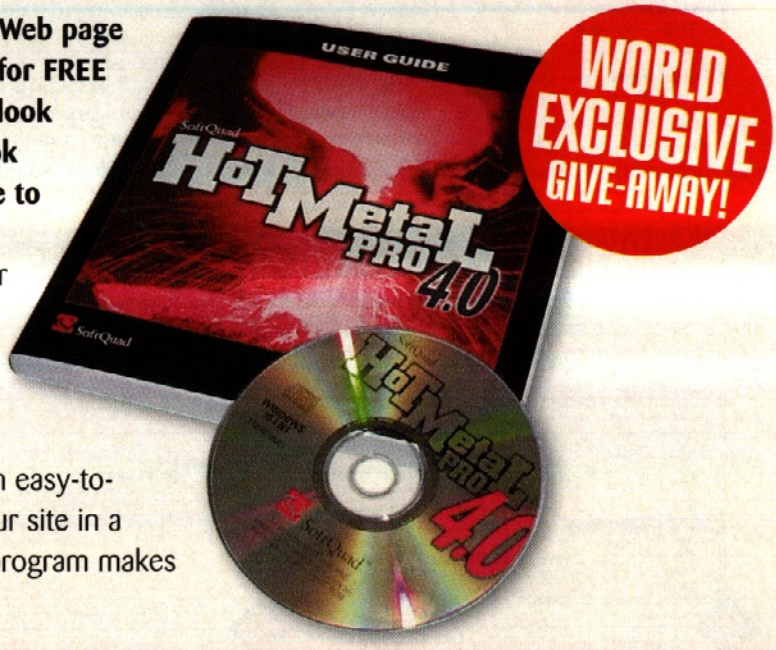
From designing great looking Web pages, to creating eye-catching graphics and using email, we'll help you get the most out of the Net – whether you're a fresh-faced newcomer or a hardened expert.

Look out for the brand new Practical Internet on newstands from April 6 or call the subscriptions hotline today on 01202 200200 to ensure you don't miss out.

HOTMETAL PRO 4 FREE ON THE COVER OF NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE!

Get a fully-working version of top Web page creation package HoTMetaL Pro 4 for FREE on the cover of next month's new-look Practical Internet PLUS a FREE book explaining how to use the software to create a great looking site.

Available free for the first time ever on a magazine, HoTMetaL Pro 4 lets you create fanstastic Web pages with frames, tables, forms, imagemaps and advanced features. The free 64 page book will explain in easy-to-follow steps how you can design your site in a matter of minutes. Worth £99, the program makes designing Web pages a doddle!



DON'T MISS OUT!

ORDER YOUR COPY OF ISSUE 40 OF PRACTICAL INTERNET TODAY BY FILLING IN THE FORM ON PAGE 129.

IS IT BETA THAN EVER?

INTERNET EXPLORER 5.5 BETA

The latest Internet Explorer beta version promises a new generation of browsers. **NICK SWEENEY** finds out if it delivers

Information

PROGRAM: Internet Explorer 5.5 and Internet Tools Platform Preview (beta release)
URL: http://msdn.microsoft.com/downloads/webtechnology/ie/iepreview.asp
COST: free
CONTACT: msdn.microsoft.com
RATING: ◆◆◆◆◆

What's new

- Print Preview
- Improved FTP user interface
- Better handling of frames
- Tighter integration with MSN Messenger and Hotmail

Shhh! You're not meant to be looking at this. At least, that's what Microsoft would have you believe. You won't find any information on IE5.5 on its site at **www.microsoft.com**, nor will you see it on 'Windows Upgrade'. Instead, the download for this latest version of the popular browser is tucked away in the MS Developer Network (**http://msdn.microsoft.com**), where site-builders merrily debate the various merits of the Document Object Model. (Fortunately, you can get it from the disk on the front of this issue.)

And that's the point, really: this beta release (or "Platform Preview") is targeted at hardcore Webmonkeys, rather than the browsing public. It first appeared in a development version of 'Millennium' – Microsoft's planned replacement for Windows 98. As word of the upgrade spread across the Net, Microsoft chose to release an official stand-alone preview, so that developers could report bugs and begin to work with its new features.

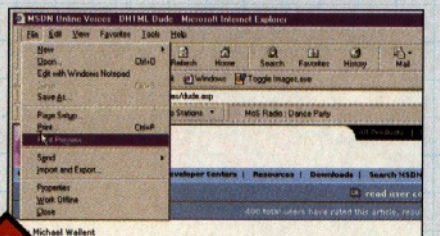
It's déjá vu all over again...

You'd be forgiven for wondering what's so different about IE5.5 once you get the program up and running. The familiar interface is virtually unchanged, though you'll notice the MSN Messenger included with the main icons, and the facelift given to the Radio toolbar. You can now see how hard copies of pages will look through the File menu's 'Print Preview' option, though it's a pity that there's no icon or shortcut key to call up this long sought-after feature.

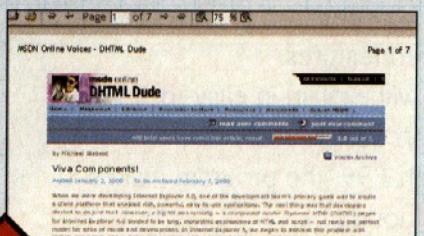
When browsing, it's hard to detect any noticeable difference in speed from IE5.01, however the browser now handles framesets more efficiently, using less of your PC's resources, and the Explorer-based FTP interface has also been overhauled to allow drag-and-drop file transfers. But the most noticeable interface

THE IE5.5 PRINT PREVIEW

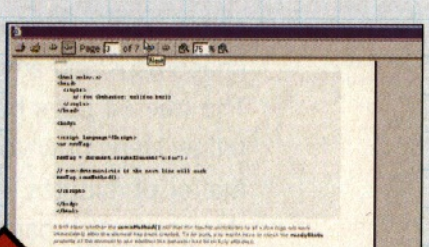
TRANSFERRING WEB PAGES FROM YOUR PC ONTO PAPER IS NOW EASIER THAN EVER



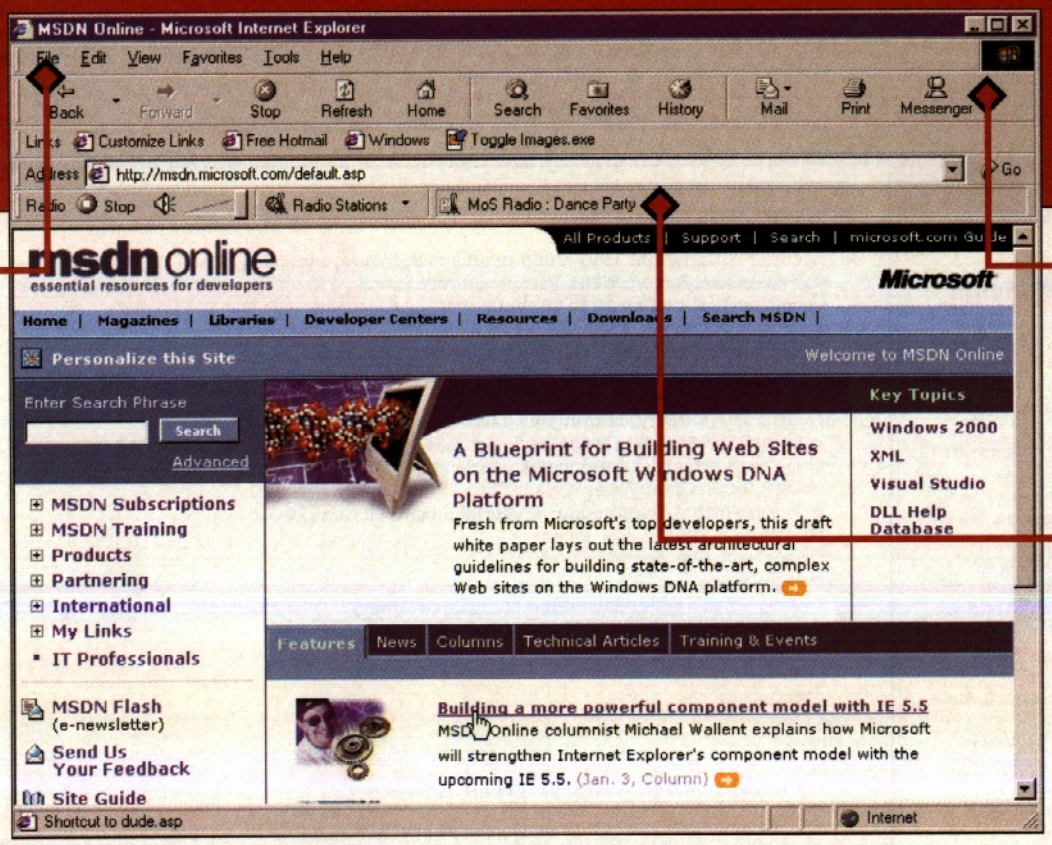
1 To see what pages will look like after you've printed them, start IE5.5's new Print Preview feature by selecting it from the File menu. Remember that the Print icon on the main toolbar won't give you the option to preview: so think, before you click!



2 The preview window should appear on top of IE: you can treat it like any other window. It shows the site as it would look on paper: you can change whether backgrounds and frames get printed from the Advanced section of the Internet Tools dialogue box.



3 If the Web page covers more than one sheet of paper, you can use the arrow icons to flick forward and back between the different pages. The double arrows can be used to take you to the beginning and end of the file.



The File menu finally contains a much-needed Print Preview option

The MSN Messenger Client is now accessible from the main icon bar

The revamped Radio Toolbar gives you easy access to live streaming audio

upgrades aren't to the browser itself, but to the other 'Internet Tools'. The tighter integration between Outlook Express and the MSN Messenger Client makes it easier to switch between instant messaging and email, while both programs make it easy to check a Hotmail account outside the normal browser interface: ideal if you do things the Microsoft way.

Ice to know you!

Browsers are like icebergs, there's always much more beneath the surface. The IE5.5 beta is no exception to this rule. This release incorporates the various patches and security fixes since the launch of IE5, and following the relaxation of US export controls, the encryption strength has been increased from 40 to 56-bit. But it's far more than a bugfix. Microsoft's aim has been to make IE the undisputed leader in handling new Web technologies such as XML and Dynamic HTML (DHTML), and this is where IE5.5's main appeal lies.

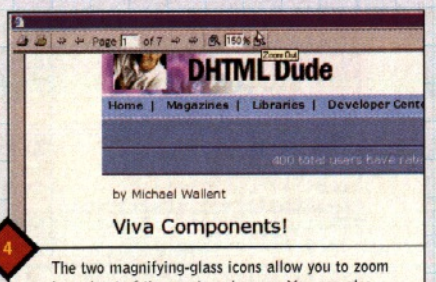
Without boring you with the detail, XML and DHTML make it easier to put dynamic content onto the Web, closing the gap between sites and applications. Sites like **www.halfbrain.com** already use these technologies to create Web-based spreadsheets without the bloat of Excel – but DHTML still remains a troublesome commodity.

Time off for good behaviour

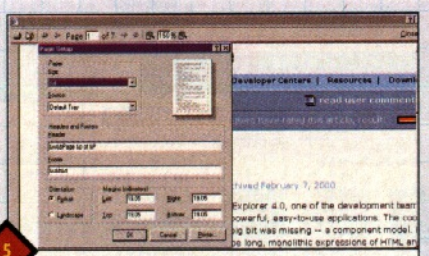
IE5 introduced something called 'behaviours', which allowed designers to script their own customisations to existing HTML and XML tags. Its main flaw was that these behaviours could be altered in pages by things like cascading style sheets, creating "encapsulation leaks". The aim in IE5.5 was to fix this problem. It was also to introduce new scripting features which make it easier to create 'modular' sites where components can be re-used in different environments. You'd be right in thinking that this sounds technical: bleeding-edge Web building is increasingly a job for dedicated programmers. In the long run, though, it means that you'll have more control over the look and feel of your sites, whether you make your living from designing sites, or not.

ON THE CD Internet

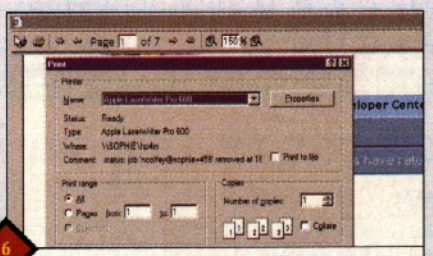
You'll find the Beta version of Internet Explorer 5.5 on the cover CD



4 The two magnifying-glass icons allow you to zoom in and out of the previewed pages. You can also enter a number in the box between the two icons to see the page zoom to a specific percentage of its normal size.

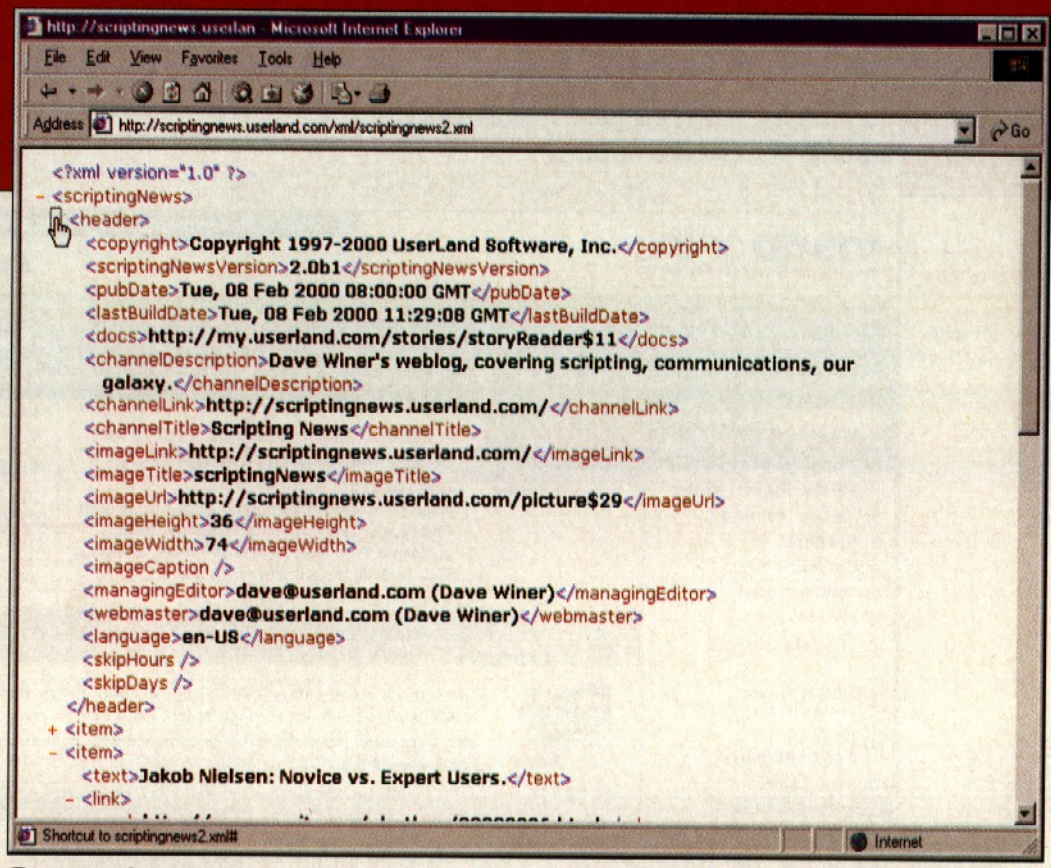


5 By selecting the Page Setup icon, you can alter elements such as paper size, orientation and source. You can also adjust page margins and customise the header and footer of each page to include information such as the URL or the page title.



6 Finally, when you're satisfied with the preview, select the 'Printer' icon to launch the standard Print dialogue box. This lets you choose a number of options. Once that's done, click on 'OK' to start printing the page.

Microsoft's aim has been to make IE the undisputed leader in handling new Web technologies such as XML (shown right) and this is where IE 5.5's appeal lies. It makes XML scripting a doddle



What you're saying

"I've got to admit... even as a pre-release and having a few bugs, 5.5 is a heck of a lot faster than the previous versions of IE..."
Matt Shankster, 22, Manchester

"5.5 is an absolute pain – the beta of 5.0 was about ten times more stable... I get crashes, constant "cannot find server" messages when Netscape has no probs at all, a slow speed (I mean slow), and all the other problems listed in the known issues bit – it's horrible!"
Tom Page, via Usenet

"After years of developing this product, MS has come out with a version of the most fundamental element of their OS, it comes without the ability to correctly uninstall it. Beta or not, for a product that is so high profile to come without this feature is very poor indeed."
Kenneth Parsons, 34, London

Huh?!

THOSE INTERNET EXPLORER 5.5 TERMS EXPLAINED

Behaviours
Modular elements which customise particular elements of HTML, and can be included in pages without being affected by their content.

DHMTL
Dynamic HTML – a general term for the use of JavaScript, Cascading Style Sheets, the Document Object Model and XML to change individual pages based on user interaction.

Document Object Model
A system for categorising the different elements within a page, allowing designers greater control over the way they interact with DHTML.

XML
eXtensible Markup language, allowing Web designers to create their own tags to mark up content. Used to allow greater integration between applications such as databases and the Web.

Caveat browser

Still itching to try out IE5.5? Great: but do remember that for the moment, it's only a 'beta' or preview release, meaning that there are still plenty of bugs that need ironing out. (In fact, beta releases are popular mainly because companies get to use the entire Net community as unpaid testers!) You'll find a list of known 'issues' with the installer: for example, we've had quite a few unexplained crashes and problems with forms, which is annoying if you buy online.

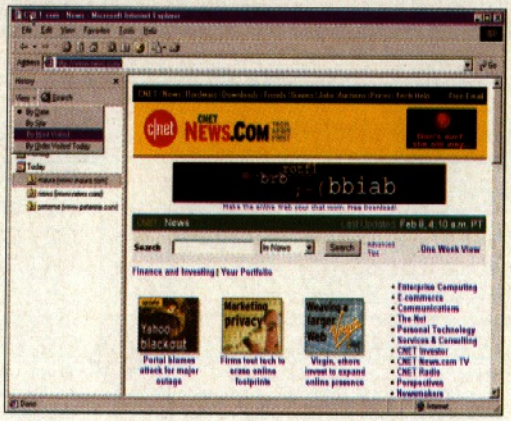
Preparation is the key

So, if you want to give it a look, minimise the potential problems. Back up your essential files, close down your applications and disable system tools such as Norton Utilities before installing. And be warned: this pre-release version won't co-exist with IE5.01 and if you choose to uninstall it before the official release, you may have trouble getting back to your original setup, especially if you use Outlook Express. It's likely that you'll need to restore a number of system files, so make sure you've got your Windows installation CD handy, together with an IE5 installer (ie a Practical Internet cover CD) to update things straight away. If you want to test a next-generation browser without the fear of a reinstall, it might be better if you had a look at Mozilla (www.mozilla.org), the open-source rewrite of Netscape.

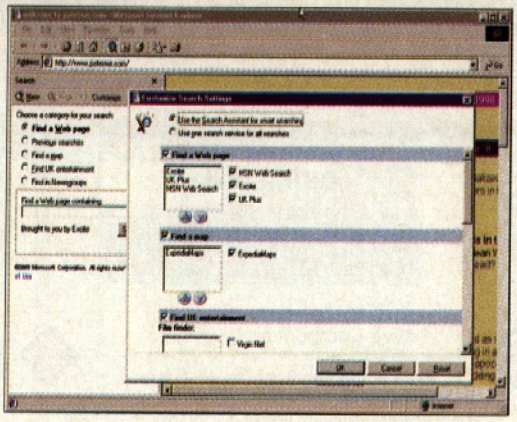
Is it worth the install? We're not convinced: you won't see the effects of XML and DHTML for a while yet, and there aren't enough general improvements to the browser interface to make it work risking the stability of your system. That said, this sneak preview, paving the way for an official launch in the summer, shows the way that Microsoft is using its dominance to redefine what can be done with the browser: the future of the Web is dynamic. PI

INTERNET EXPLORER 5.5 BETA

Verdict:	Techies will love it: the rest of us can wait
Features:	◆◆◆◆◆
Ease of use:	◆◆◆◆◆
Value:	◆◆◆◆◆
Overall:	◆◆◆◆◆



IE 5.5 lets you search through the Web links in your history folder by date, site, frequency of visits and the order you've visited them



The new, improved searching functions let you find Web pages, maps and even films using a wide cross-section of the Net's search engines

Something to watch out for when choosing a hosting company

VERIO is the world's leading web hosting company, hosting over 300,000 websites.

2 years' domain registration with email forwarding

£49.95

plus VAT, no hidden extras

Professional website hosting from

£119.95

per year, plus VAT
(shorter contracts available)

Preferred partner for

ACTINIC

CompuServe 2000

Support for

Microsoft FrontPage 2000

VERIO™

info@verio.co.uk www.verio.co.uk

0800 917 9069

Picures posed by model

PLACE YOUR BETS!

There's plenty of money to be made gambling online, but you'd better know what you're doing. **PAUL NEWMAN** takes a trip to the Web's bookies to have a flutter

From the penny arcades found on the Bournemouth promenade, to the totally overblown sleaze of Las Vegas, everybody likes a punt. It's that buzz you get from picking up your winnings and heading for the pub to buy some new friends. It's the thrill of losing money you can't afford. And then there's the ego trip of looking like you know what you're doing when you strike it lucky...

However, as with so much in life, the Internet is bringing activities directly into your home. It's a very real possibility that Internet gambling could soon make a trip to the bookies or a flight to Las Vegas a thing of the past. All you have to do to enjoy a flutter is log on and then gamble away.

There are currently two distinctly different types of online betting available to Net users. There's the good old-fashioned bookmaker, where the smoky atmosphere of Ladbrokes or William Hill is replicated on a squeaky-clean Web interface, or there's the offshore casino where you can go gambling US-style and pretend you're playing cards with Robert DeNiro.

ON THE CD Internet

You'll find a range of Net gambling programs on our CD

Calling itself the "leader in sports spread betting," Sporting Index offers an excellent resource for those who prefer this type of betting

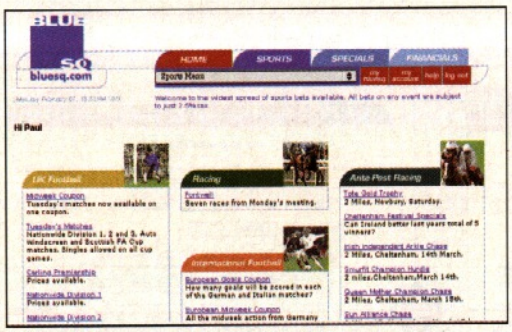
Ahh, the excitement of placing a bet. Unfortunately the good vibes ran out, and our horse failed to live up to expectations. Oh well, you win some and you can lose some (or all, in our case)

With the bookmaker method, you can take comfort in the fact that you'll be playing a familiar system in a familiar environment. Most UK bookies have accepted credit cards over the phone for many years now – you'll find that their Web sites merely replicate this system, processing all the transactions though a server like the secure shopping cart servers found on shopping sites.

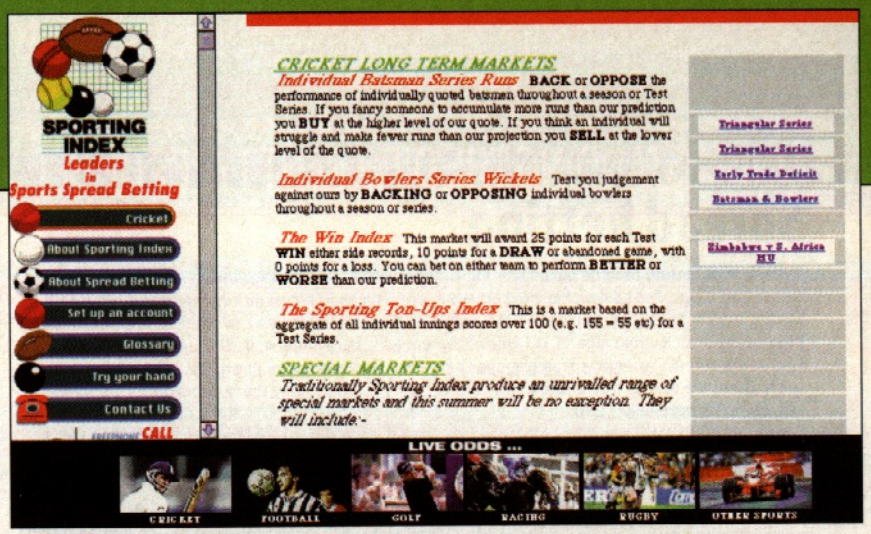
The offshore casinos are a different kettle of fish, though. Here, you'll be invited to join a hand of poker, go head-to-head against the house dealer at blackjack or chance your arm on the roulette wheel. If you're not familiar with the ins and outs of these games, then forget it. You'll be chucking your money away.

Amazingly, though, online gambling is actually illegal in the US, so all the casinos and bookmakers are based offshore. However, don't worry about security at these sites. Each casino will be based under the jurisdiction of a country and will therefore have to adhere to very strict laws governing gaming in order to retain their licenses. Bear in mind, though, that as with everything on the Net, there are some unscrupulous and predatory cowboys out there who won't think twice about abusing your credit card details.

For the purpose of this article, we'll concentrate on the UK – it's familiar, easy and trustworthy. Not all of us are casino wizards, but most of us can be pretty sure Arsenal will beat Bradford and that Tony McCoy can ride winners on a regular basis. Besides, betting on a weekend of sporting action can be a great deal of fun and you'd rather lose your money to an English bookie rather than a smug Yank casino wouldn't you?



Here's a taster of what you can bet on at the Blue Square site. As you can see, there's lots of football and horse racing to choose from, so you're never stuck for choice



UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF BET

Fixed odds

This is the most common form of betting and where you bet on a fixed price with the bookmaker. They offer you a price, say 6-1, which means that for every £1 you put on for a win, you'll get £6 back plus your original stake. With horse racing you can also bet on a horse getting a place at reduced odds or choose an each way bet where you win, although modestly, when the horse comes either first or gets a place.

Relive the feeling of being in a bookies with William Hill's site

Early doors

10am Saturday: It's judgement day. The time has arrived for me to put my money where my mouth is and work out where best to place my bets and how to actually gamble online. It's a good day for betting, with rugby's Six Nations Championship, a full programme of Premiership football, racing from Sandown and Uttoxeter and One Day International cricket from South Africa.

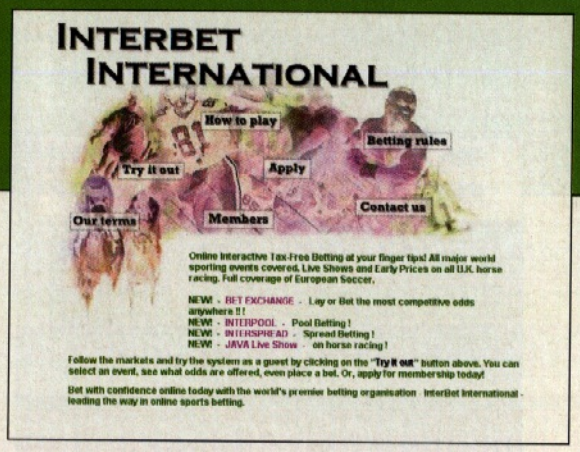
Hang on, I've forgotten one thing, a paper. A quick dash down to the newsagent adds a modcium of ➤

Fear and loathing not in Las Vegas

AS mentioned earlier, it's illegal to base an online gambling venture in the US. This means that all serious gambling operations are located offshore, typically in the Caribbean, and that any casinos based in America are designed for fun so you can't bet for money.

Seeing as so few people in this country even go to casinos, we've focused on bookmakers in our article, but on our cover disc you'll find some great casino programs which will give you a taste for the US way of doing things. We've got InterCasino Live v3.02 which allows you to bet against other people with real money over the Net. Then there's Casino Internationale where you can play six different gambling simulations in addition to being able to gamble online. We've even got Kenny Rogers' Casino for a bit of old time Vegas schmaltz. Islands in the sun anybody?

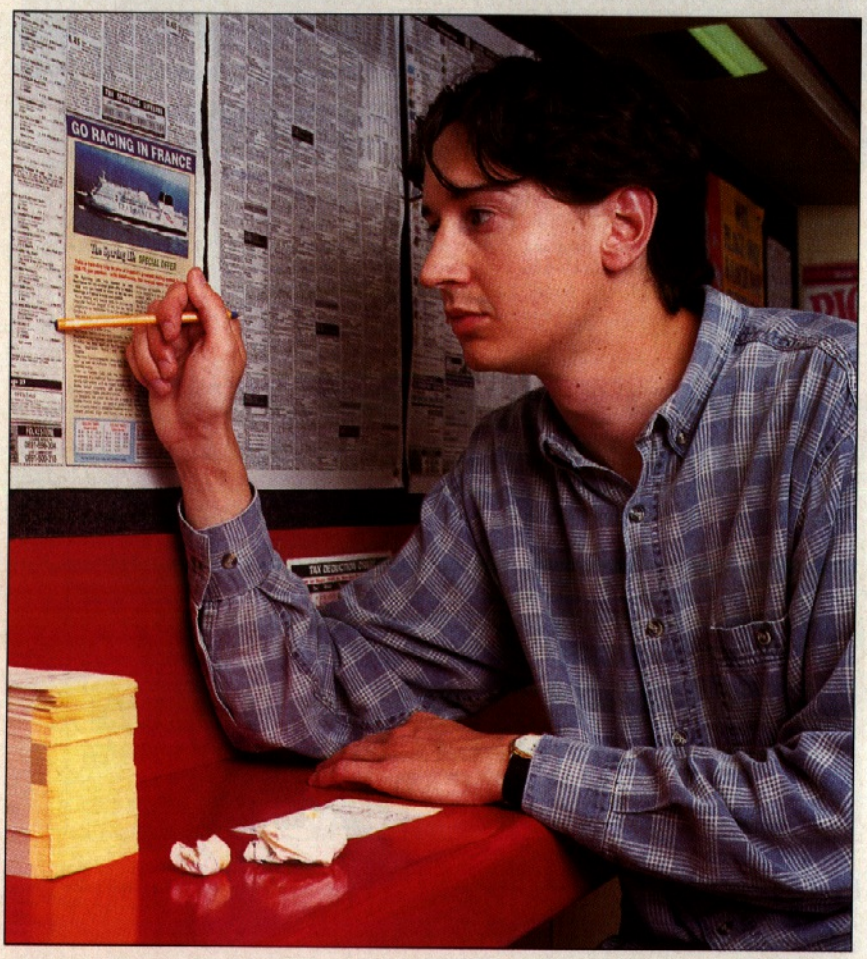
To enjoy the benefits of tax-free betting, visit Interbet International and have a flutter (www.inter-bet.com)



UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF BET

Spread betting

This form of betting became popular in the Eighties when more people started speculating on the Stock Exchange. The bookmaker predicts what will happen in a certain event and sets a price. In a cricket match, the bookie could predict England will score 230 runs in an innings. The punter then buys above or below this figure. If I think England will score more runs, I'll buy each run above 230 at £1 and if I'm right, the bookmaker pays me £1 for every run above 230. However, and this is the downside of this type of betting, if I'm wrong, I'll have to pay the bookmaker £1 for every run England score under 230.



professionalism and suddenly I'm beginning to feel cocky. This gambling lark? I'm a seasoned pro me, mate... 'ere fancy a tip on the 3.45 at Glorious Goodwood? I'm the new John McCririck. Yup, we're gonna win a lot of money today, my son, and then we're heading for a celebratory booze-up...

Starters orders

12pm: First point of call is Blue Sq (www.bluesq.com), a specialist UK online betting firm, which offers odds on a wide range of different sporting events. I fancy rugby and examine the odds. England v Ireland looks like a foregone conclusion, so I ignore it in favour of Italy v Scotland and Wales v France. Nobody is giving Italy a chance, but a bet on Scotland to win by a certain amount of points looks promising. The bookies are offering 6-1 a Scottish victory by 6-10 points so I snap it up with a well placed fiver. Likewise, France v Wales. Should be a close one, with the French just shading it. I back France to win by less than six points with another fiver and settle back, feeling smug about my seemingly superior knowledge.

With my rugby wagers secured, it's time to study the form guides and back a few horses. The gee gees have always been my achilles heel, so I make a concerted effort to study the form properly and pick sensible bets for once. Choosing Edmond to win the 1.45pm from Uttoxeter at 7/4, I dole out another fiver. Time to try a tipster, methinks. Peter Scudamore is backing Good Vibes to win the 3.05 from Sandown in the *Daily Mail* so I go large with a tenner at 9/2 and mentally start totting up my winnings.

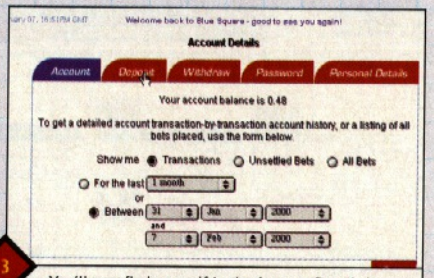
With £30 worth of bets lodged at Blue Sq, I decide to try out William Hill (www.willhill.com) for a touch of football betting. Sadly, it proves impossible to track down either Bruce Grobelaar or John Fashanu for some

HOW TO PLACE A BET ONLINE WITH BLUE SQ

HOW YOU CAN LET BLUE SQ FEEL THE FIBRE OF YOUR FABRIC AS YOU PREPARE TO HAVE A FLUTTER

1 First you have to get a BlueSq login. Do this via the home page and make sure you remember your password. This is your key to returning to the site, so don't forget it.

2 Once you've logged in and have accessed the betting interface, click on the toolbar where it says 'My Account'. This is where you input funds to allow you to start gambling.



3 You'll now find yourself in the Account Details box. To input funds, simply click on the toolbar where it says 'Deposit'.

Come down the bookies...

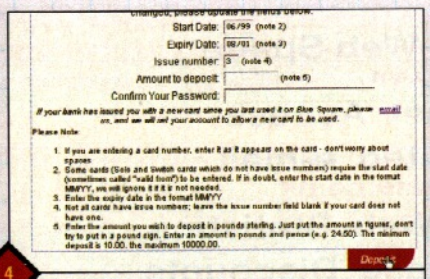
There are plenty of places to bet online, but where do you find them and what's on offer?

Bookmaker	URL	What type of betting	Sports offered	Tax	cards accepted
Bluesq	www.bluesq.com	Fixed odds/spread	All major events	Yes	Visa/Delta/Switch/Solo
Interbet	www.inter-bet.com	Spread/fixed odds	All major events	No	Visa/Mastercard/Switch/Delta
Eurobet (Coral)	www.eurobet.com	Fixed/Handicapping	Mainly soccer, no horses	No	Visa/Mastercard/Delta/Switch
Sporting Index	www.sportingindex.com	Spread	All major events	Yes	Depends on account, but credit and debit
Sporting Bet	www.sportingbet.com	Fixed odds	All major events	No	Visa/Mastercard
Total Bet (Tote)	www.totalbet.com	Fixed odds/pools	All major events	Yes	Debit cards only
UK Betting	www.ukbetting.com	Fixed	All major events	Yes	Switch/Solo/Delta/Visa
William Hill	www.williamhill.co.uk/www.willhill.com	Fixed/Spread	All major events	Yes/No	Domestic and offshore sites Visa/Mastercard/Eurocard offshore and Debit cards domestic

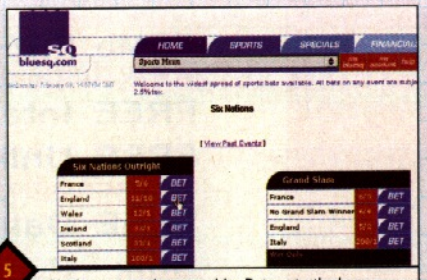
expert advice, so I opt to go it alone. The first thing to strike me is how poor the odds are. It simply isn't worth betting on the result unless you can predict the score, first goal scorer or half-time score. A quick look through the day's games offers little inspiration. I decide to back Kevin Phillips with a fiver at 4-1 to score first in the Tyneside derby and then look into the possibility of a three match forecast. Liverpool to beat Leeds, Villa to beat Watford and Arsenal to beat Bradford looks a certainty. With a tenner placed on this one I'll be rich in the time it takes Steve Ryder to say "And now over to bog snorkelling in Romney Marsh" on *Grandstand*.

And they're off...

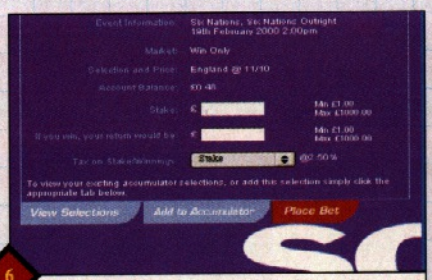
2pm: All bets are on. It's time to retreat to the pub to watch the results and a tide of money roll in. This is going to be one hell of a session. I'm dynamite, invincible, a money maker, the Bill Gates of gambling. Nothing can go wrong, I'm the man to beat the bookies and tonight's going to be a very good night out on the town, right?



4 On the next page you'll be asked for your details. Visa, Switch and Solo are all accepted here. Choose the amount of money to deposit, click 'Deposit' and BlueSq will debit your account.



5 You're now ready to gamble. Return to the home page and select a sport to bet on. Look through the odds and take your time before picking a bet, then click where it says 'Bet'.



6 On the next screen you'll see a pop-up window of your betting slip. When you're convinced everything is correct and you're ready to take the plunge, click on 'Place Bet'.

For some live interactive betting on racing and football matches, get along to ukbetting.com (www.ukbetting.com)

UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF BET

Forecast betting

A forecast bet is one where you predict a series of results in order to increase the odds and hopefully your winnings. When I bet, I chose to predict the outcome of three football matches, a seemingly simple task. All three odds are multiplied together, if you win this figure is multiplied by your stake to determine your winnings. Another form of forecast bet is an accumulator where you bet on multiple horse races. The odds are high with this type of betting, but the chances of winning are low.

Final score

5pm: Wrong. Scotland and Wales are woeful and both go down heavily. Each one of my horses comes in second, bringing me nothing but bad vibes, and even Bradford manage to upset Arsenal in the football with a goal from bloody Dean Saunders of all people. To make matters worse, Kevin Phillips scores twice in the Tyneside derby, but neither goal is scored first.

The results are all in and a row of empty Guinness pint glasses and used Bensons offers scant consolation for the sea of virtual betting slips I've amassed on my hard drive. Nothing has come in. Absolutely sod all. Bloody Internet gambling doesn't even give me the pleasure of tearing up a betting slip in front of my mates! I don't get to nick any of those handy little pens, either.

My final bet is supposed to be on Sunday's cricket. I was intending to place a spread bet with Sporting Index (www.sportingindex.com) and planned to buy South Africa to score a certain number of runs. Bearing in mind the huge risks involved and my pitiful results, I decide wisely against it, cut my losses and drown my sorrows with another Guinness.

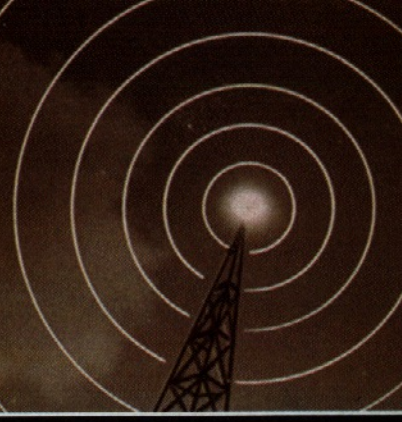
Quit while you're behind

So my brief foray into Net gambling proved disastrous. I only placed what I thought were sensible bets using the form book and expert advice as my guides, but it all went horribly wrong. One fluke result, as Italy and Bradford demonstrated, can turn everything on its head and leave you playing catch-up. At least I was strong enough to call it a day and ditch the cricket spread bet, which could have proved disastrous.

By all means try online gambling out for yourselves and have some fun, but don't get hooked and make sure you took a responsible attitude. It's never nice to lose money and, as ever, the odds are heavily stacked against you. As for me, I'm heading back to the promenade to find some savvy 80-year-old fruit machine goddess. Hopefully she'll show me where I'm going wrong...

DOMAIN REGISTRATION
£19.99
50Mb FREE Web Space
www.domain.co.uk
FREE Internet Access
FREE Unlimited e-mail
anyname@domain.co.uk
FREE Daily Web Statistics
Bulk Purchase Discounts
And CGI And Front Page Options
lo-call 0845 117 0366
visit www.freezone.co.uk
FREEZONE internet

We sell products that make the web work harder for you



e:c@ll

Talking e-mail! E:call converts your incoming e-mail into speech and automatically calls your mobile and READS the message to you. You can then choose to fax the text to a number of your choice. Connection fee £15. Call now for a month's FREE trial.

SPEAK FREE

A Speak Free button on your website will not only allow visitors to talk to you free directly off your site, but will also build up a database of these customers for you as it is used.

What's more, if your business is engaged or you are called out of hours, then Speak Free will e-mail you instantly with all the customer details to call. NEVER MISS ANOTHER SALE OFF YOUR SITE! Connection fee £50, monthly charge £35 to include 60 minutes of call traffic, calls charged at 7 pence per minute thereafter.

PAWS Premium Access to Web Servers

Software which allows a website owner to charge visitors to restricted areas of his/her website, without the need for pre-payment by credit card or any other method. Revenues are generated via Premium Rate telephone numbers. The software is portable and can work on any server. Annual licence fee £600 per annum.

PNC WEB BUILDER

A website built for your company for £850 fixed fee, with a monthly hosting fee of £35. Includes 5 pages of information, 5 content updates per month, 10 e-mail accounts and 20mb web space. Extra pages can be added at £50 per page. We built www.smartOne.co.uk, so we can easily build a site for you! Get on-line today.

PNC WEB WATCHER

Web Watcher will look at your site every three minutes. If your site is down, the service will call a mobile or telephone number that you designate and tell you that your site is down. It reads the message to you utilising the text to speech technology of E:call. Retail price £240 per annum per licence.

WORM

WORM is a clever program which consolidates all the e-mail addresses you are using, and directs the received mail on those addresses to your favourite nominated address. So you need never worry about losing your e-mail address again when swapping ISPs. £15 per annum.

PNC TOP DOG

By submitting your address every month we can help you achieve top ranking in the top 25 search engines with our PNC Top Dog program, all for only £35 per month. Order Top Dog today!

Smartone .co.uk

Be Smart. Be Happy. Log on to www.smartOne.co.uk our FREE Internet Access Portal.

Call 08700 774411

or go to **www.pnctele.com**

PNC TELE.NET

Reseller enquiries invited

PNC Tele.net Ltd is a subsidiary of PNC Tele.com Plc, Cavallino House, Corsley Heath, Near Warminster, Wiltshire, BA12 7PL
Registered office: as above Registered in England no. 2709891. e-mail: salesenquiries@pnctele.com All prices exclude Vat

'All in One'

NETALIA INTERNET

Netalia's web package combines domain name registration, fast Internet ISDN/Modem connectivity with 40Mb of commercial web space, no more slow connectivity, expensive technical support calls, an ALL-in-ONE Internet Package.

0800 358 0084

NETALIA INTERNET

Our ALL-in-ONE costs £160.00 per annum, and includes all initial naming authority charges.

- Domain Name Registration
- 0845 Internet Access
- 40Mb of commercial web space
- Frontpage support with forms
- Full ftp access
- Colour web statistics
- Full CGI-bin directory
- POP3 mailbox combined with unlimited email addresses
- Webmail and auto-responders
- 3Gb monthly transfer rate

ISDN Network Connectivity

Do you need to connect your office Network to the Internet, but been put off by prices upwards from £800? Our new ISDN network solution is keenly priced at £300 for 64k or £450 for 128k with no set up charges and includes up to 32 network addresses as standard.

E-commerce - A new initiative from Netalia.

In partnership with a leading credit card payment centre we can now provide not only the tools, but subject to approval, a merchant account.

For further details call our sales team. **0800 358 0084**

Email:sales@netalia.com

www.netalia.com

PRINTER POWER

FOUR LEXMARK Z11 TOY STORY 2 PRINTER PACKAGES UP FOR GRABS!

IF your life is sadly lacking in colour, inkjet some pizzazz into it with a Lexmark Z range printer. Priced between £79 and £159, there is a model to suit every need and pocket.

The Z11 is the only entry-level printer on the market to incorporate an advanced feature set. This includes industry-leading 1200 x 1200 dots per inch (dpi) output, Accu-Feed paper handling and industrial design. It boasts speeds of up to four pages per minute (ppm) in black and 2.5 ppm in colour. You can pick up this printer for just £79.

The Lexmark Z31 Color Jetprinter gives you 1200 x 1200 dots per inch at an impressive eight ppm for black text and 3.5 ppm in colour. It retails for just £129.

Completing the trio is the Lexmark Z51 Color Jetprinter, which sells for £159. This model is a new generation printer for both home and business environments. A resolution of 1200 x 1200 dpi is combined with one of the smallest ink drop sizes currently available – seven picolitres. It can produce blazing print speeds of up to 10 ppm black text and five ppm colour. Parallel or USB, the choice is yours.

To celebrate the release of *Toy Story 2* in cinemas across the UK, Lexmark is bundling together an interactive copy of *Toy Story 2* CD-ROM with every Z Series printer. The Print Studio allows fans of the smash film to design and print out anything from posters to stickers. Fans of Buzz and Woody can even incorporate their own photographs into 20 special *Toy Story 2* templates.

Not wanting our readers to miss out on the fun, *Practical Internet* has teamed up with Lexmark to give away four stonking Lexmark Z11 printers, complete with the *Toy Story 2* CD-ROM. To be in with a chance of winning, simply answer the following question:

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING IS A CHARACTER FROM *TOY STORY*?

A) BUZZY BEE
B) BUZZ LIGHTYEAR
C) BUZZ ALDRIN

Email your answer, name and address to **pi@paragon.co.uk** with the subject heading 'Lexmark'. Alternatively, scribble your effort on the back of a postcard and send it to our postal address.

For more information on all Lexmark's products, see **www.lexmark.co.uk.**

WIN!
A LEXMARK PRINTER

Closing date for entries is 6 April 2000. Employees of Paragon Publishing, Lexmark or anyone associated with these organisations may not enter. Multiple entries will be humiliated. The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. From time to time, you may be sent news about exciting new products and opportunities that are of interest to *Practical Internet* readers. If you do not wish to receive such information, please indicate this on your entry. No cash alternative is available.

ONE-STEP WEB HOSTING

for businesses that are serious about the Internet

BUSINESS PRO A/C

100MB fast UK-based webspace
own CGI-BIN & pre-installed scripts
automatic graphical access statistics
unlimited updates via FTP or web
technical support & online help
2GB bandwidth allowance per month
www.yourname.co.uk or yourname.com
domain name registration fees for 2 years
Miva, PHP3, MySQL & RealAudio support
100 POP3 boxes, unlim. email addresses
unlim. autoresponders & announcement lists
secure server access & FrontPage extensions
60 min setup & 30 day money-back guarantee
PLUS: Your own Virtual Control Panel

Free Setup, £199 p.a.

BUSINESS E-COMMERCE

All the features of the Business Pro, plus online retailing capability and Miva Merchant license.

Complete shopping cart solution, fully installed and ready-to-run. Unlimited products and categories, customisable look and feel. Integrated with secure server, easy to use with online help and admin-friendly web interface.

FREE SETUP
£69.99
PER MONTH OR
£499 p.a.

NEW DATACENTER!

"After months of planning and implementation, the new WebFusion Datacenter is now open. Webfusion have spent over 1 Million pounds creating the UK's most advanced web hosting data facility as part of their ongoing commitment to excellence and service."

TOUR THE DATACENTER AT OUR WEBSITE

0115 9170000

Call before 5.30pm, be Setup Within the Hour!

Prices exclude VAT. We welcome payment by cheque, standing order, credit or debit card

WebFusion®
Seriously Easy Web Hosting®

www.webfusion.co.uk
sales@webfusion.co.uk

SPONSORED BY WEBFUSION
CONTACT SALES ON
0115 917 0000
OR VISIT
HTTP://WWW.WEBFUSION.CO.UK
WebFusion
Seriously Easy Web Hosting

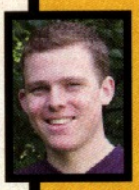
BUILDING SITE: PAGE 56
INTERACT: PAGE 58
DESIGN DOCTOR: PAGE 59
DYNAMITE DOZEN: PAGE 60

HOME IMPROVEMENT

Web design guru **JAMES SEABRIGHT** is here to help with your home site, through tutorials, reviews and practical advice

Comment

HOW THINGS HAVE IMPROVED OVER THE YEARS



NEXT issue's new-look *Practical Internet* will see a different format to the Home Improvement section, but don't worry, there will still be all the essential advice you need to keep your home page nice and tidy.

Web publishing has progressed in leaps and bounds since the first Home Improvement appeared back in issue 12, most notably through becoming more accessible thanks to WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) editors. HTML still has a place amongst all this user-friendliness, as shown in this issue's Spotlight report, which reveals it will live on into the XML era through XHTML.

But Home Improvement has always been about more than the Web's technology. More important is the way information is presented in an online format. Designing for the Web browser window and the computer screen is a very specific brief, and one that has to be tackled without forgetting the first priority – ease of use. Whatever your Web project or computer platform, remember this and you can't go far wrong.

Thanks for reading Home Improvement, and please do keep sending your site URLs, queries and comments to me at **james@cubeb.co.uk**.

SPOTLIGHT: HTML JOINS THE XML REVOLUTION

The future of the Web: XHTML

IT'S increasingly difficult to maximise the potential of online publishing using HTML, with its limits becoming more obvious. However, the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C, www.w3.org) has created XHTML. XHTML code doesn't look much different to HTML, and still uses almost all of the tags you'll be familiar with from coding Web pages.

Structure and style

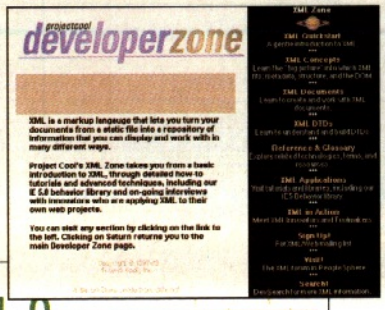
What makes XHTML different is that it is based on XML, or eXtensible Markup Language, which establishes a division between the structure and appearance of documents. A major benefit of distinguishing structure from style is that documents can easily be adapted for use with different media. By 2002, up to three quarters of Internet viewing is expected to take place on 'alternative platforms' like mobile phones. This means that you shouldn't design your home page with a particular screen resolution in mind.

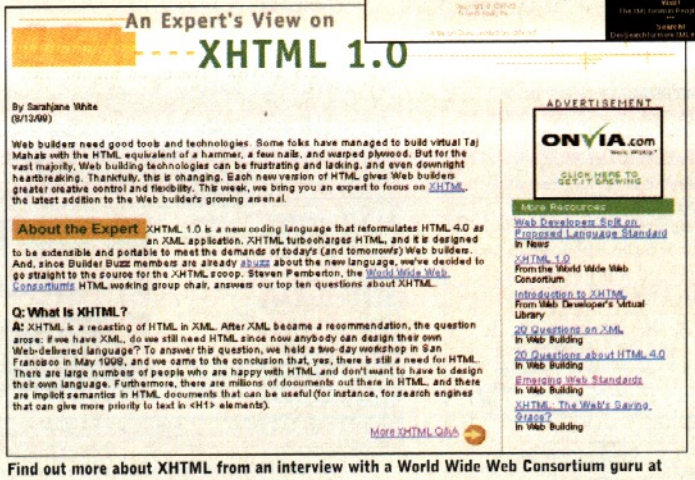
Stop it and tidy up

As a result of this structure and style divide, there's even less room for sloppy design. There are many poorly designed pages on the Web, which often go unnoticed because Web browser software tolerates incorrect HTML. With XHTML, the rulebook states that incorrect code should not be displayed at all. One particular rule to watch out for demands that all tags be in lower case, because XHTML sees upper-case as meaning something different. It's important to stick to the strict specification, so future updates to XHTML do not make old code unusable. And XHTML is much easier to update than HTML, thanks to its modular approach. Now bells and whistles to be added to the core specification without software versions or computer platforms causing problems.

Leap of faith

XHTML is not difficult and there's no reason why you can't start using it instead of HTML. It's even possible to have your HTML files converted by using one of the freely downloadable versions of HTML Tidy from www.w3.org/People/Raggett/tidy. A Mac version is available from the following URL: www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/1057/tidy.html.





Find out more about XHTML from an interview with a World Wide Web Consortium guru at www.builder.com/Authoring/Zhtml/index.html

SPONSORED BY WEBFUSION
CONTACT SALES ON 0115 917 0000
HTTP://WWW.WEBFUSION.CO.UK

BUILDING SITE

In the final installment of Building Site, we show you how to navigate your site in seconds with a little help from JavaScript

TOPTIP

Although 90% of home Net users were "concerned" by the recent denial of service attacks and one in three were directly affected by the outages, a new survey find there's no consensus on how the Net should be policed.

BEST OF THE WEB

HERE ARE THREE OF THE WEB'S MOST USER-FRIENDLY SITES – LOOK AND LEARN...

1 TotalWebmaster

www.totalwebmaster.com

If you ever find yourself stuck for a free Web site resource, and need to find the information you're looking for quickly and easily, then this is the place to go. The emphasis is on quality rather than quantity, but there are still a good number of links on this site that will lead you straight to the best site add-ons and Web tutorials that are available online. A very handy site, and one you should consider bookmarking.

2 Free Digiweb

http://freeweb.digiweb.com

Digiweb will furnish you with a completely free Web site, complete with optional add-ons such as a search engine, a hit counter, FrontPage extensions and database functionality. It'll even add adverts to your page automatically. However, if you want to create an ad-free haven, it will still only cost you a mere $5 a month.

ONE of the simplest but most effective navigational tools is the pull-down menu. All users are familiar with this, as they resemble the menus used in operating systems like Windows to execute commands. The normal problem is that pull-down menus only activate when a 'Submit' button is clicked, as they are part of a form that has to be submitted for it to do anything. With a little sprinkling of simple JavaScript, this step can easily be avoided.

1 The code

Type the following code snippet into the <HEAD> section of the HTML file in question.

```
<script language=JavaScript>
<!—
function goClick() {
var URL =
document.browse.picker.options[document.
browse.picker.selectedIndex].value;
top.location.href = URL;
}
// —>
</script>
```

2 Choosing from the menu

Adapt the code shown below into the format required for your menu. All you need to do is change the <option> tags to include the pages and URLs that you want them to point to.

```
<form name="browse">
<select name="picker"
onChange="goClick()">
<option selected
value="index.html">QuickMenu</option>
<option value="page1.html">First
page</option>
<option value="page2.html">Second
page</option>
</select>
</form>
```

All the best Web sites, such as www.dvdreview.net, have pull-down menus for speedy navigation

Adding a form

Fill-in forms can be very useful for all kinds of Web design applications and to get you started with them, this issue's tutorial shows how to create a basic feedback form.

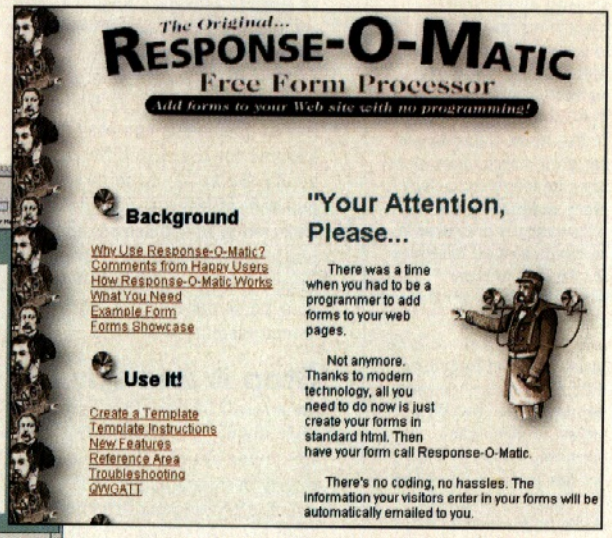
1 Creating your form

The following HTML will create a simple form, with areas for name, email address and comments to be filled in:

```
<form
action="mailto:james@paragon.co.uk"
method="post">
<pre>
Name: <input type=text name="name">
Email: <input type=text name="email">
Comments:
<textarea name="comments" rows=5
cols=80 wrap></textarea>
</pre>
<input type=submit><input
type=reset></form>
```

2 Test the form

Test out your form by filling it in yourself, and clicking the 'Submit' button. When the resulting email arrives in your inbox, it will be in a format that is very difficult to read – because the Web browser will have encoded the form before sending it on. There are shareware programs available that will decode the form response for you, but as an alternative it's possible to use a completely free service at www.response-o-matic.com, which will automatically process form responses for you.



If you want some forms to be processed, the check out the original Response-O-Matic site at www.response-o-matic.com. It will process form responses for you

SPONSORED BY WEBFUSION
CONTACT SALES ON 0115 917 0000
HTTP://WWW.WEBFUSION.CO.UK

Instant imagemaps

One of the most common means of providing quick navigation around a site is through the use of a button bar that is hotlinked by a client-side imagemap. This is where the HTML contains the map co-ordinates, and it is the Web browser itself that decides where the user should be sent based on the location of their click.

1 Push the right buttons

Open your button bar design in your graphic design package of choice (eg PaintShop Pro or whatever package you created it in). If you haven't yet made a button bar, then do this first so you've something to work with in this tutorial.

You need to have your graphics software show you the co-ordinates of where the mouse pointer is, a function which is normally found in the 'Info' palette (or possibly integrated in part of the window design). This is essential, as you must have accurate co-ordinates.

2 Hot links

Move your mouse to the top-left corner of the first area that needs to be hotlinked. Note down the co-ordinates of this location, taking the X co-ordinate first. Then move the mouse to the bottom right-hand corner of the area in question. Note down these co-ordinates. Imagemap co-ordinates are based on the top-left and bottom-right positions only, with 0,0 being the top left-hand corner of the whole button bar image. Repeat this step for all the areas of the image that need to be linked up.

3 Your hotspots

Close your graphics package, and then open up the HTML file that you want to contain the button bar. In the <HEAD> section of the HTML file, enter the following code. Repeat the <area> tag for each hotspot.

```
<map name="buttonbar">
<area type=rect coords="0,0,100,50"
href="index.html">
</map>
```

4 Seeing the bar

Now you need to enter the code that will make the button bar appear, which is simply a glorified <IMG> tag:

```
<IMG SRC="buttonbar.gif" WIDTH="100"
HEIGHT="300" BORDER="0"
USEMAP="#buttonbar">
```

Change the SRC, WIDTH and HEIGHT to fit your own image's location and dimensions. The BORDER command stops the browser from placing an ugly thick blue line around the image, and USEMAP refers to the <MAP> created in the <HEAD> of the HTML. The hash (#) in front of the name is essential.

An example of a simple form, using the code listed on the opposite page

Name:
Email:
Comments:
Submit Reset

Licence to list

Lists are one of the easiest ways to bring order where chaos would otherwise reign. In the world of HTML, there are two basic kinds of list – unordered and ordered. Unordered lists are based around bullet points, while ordered lists are numbered. An unordered list is defined by the tag <UL>, which must enclose all of the list items – defined by the tag <LI>. Rather confusingly, </LI> does not exist. The type of bullet point that's used for a list can also be specified by adding a property to the main tag – <ULTYPE = "SQUARE"> would give hollow square bullets. The other two types are CIRCLE (hollow circles) and DISC (sold circles – the default).

Ordered lists are also easy to make and are a useful way of creating tidy numbered lists without having to remember what list item number you are working on. In fact, ordered lists can have roman numerals, letters or numbers as the indexing unit, and the user can specify what list number to start with. Again, the <OL> tag must surround all <LI> tags. To specify a different indexing unit or start point, the tag changes to <OLTYPE = "i" START = "3">. That example would use lower case roman numerals, starting with 'iii.' The other TYPE options are I (upper case roman numerals), a (lower case letters), A (upper case letters), and 1 (numbers – the default).

Tabular titillation

Tables can get very complicated when you have a large numbers of cells and rows. But they have the greatest visual impact when used simply as single cell panels with a background and possibly a border. Simply use the HTML shown below, and alter the size, border, colour and alignment options to suit your needs.

```
<TABLE WIDTH = "50%" HEIGHT = "100"
BORDER = "2" BGCOLOR = "lightgreen">
<TR VALIGN = CENTER ALIGN = CENTER>
<TD><FONT SIZE = 4 FACE = "Georgia,
serif" COLOR = "darkblue">
```

Simple tables make excellent text holding devices. The example shown highlights the content away from the rest of the page and looks impressive.

```
</FONT> </TD></TR></TABLE>
```

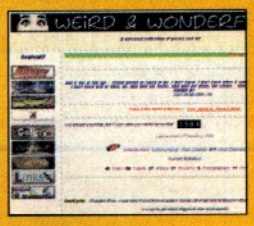
SITE OF THE MONTH

SUBMIT YOUR CREATION, AND YOU COULD WIN SITE OF THE MONTH

1 First Place

NAME: Tetra 2000
ADDRESS: www.tetra2000.totalserve.co.uk
RATING: ★★★★☆
Darren Price has created this site to make his impressive collection of desktop wallpapers available to everyone. A range of advanced HTML techniques have been well deployed, with stylish graphic design making this one of the best reader's site designs seen in a long time. He also makes the effort to update the site regularly, so there's always something new for your collection. The only downside to the site is the pointless intro page that serves very little purpose.

2 Second Place



NAME: Weird And Wonderful
ADDRESS: www.lukes.org.uk
Uppers: Lots of useful material, good frame design
Downers: Graphics are a little scrappy, quality of content varies wildly
RATING: ★★★☆☆

3 Third place

NAME: UK TNA
ADDRESS: www.tna-uk.org.uk
Uppers: Useful information resource, clean design
Downers: Pointless date and time stamp on front page
RATING: ★★☆☆☆

SPONSORED BY WEBFUSION
CONTACT SALES ON 0115 917 0000
HTTP://WWW.WEBFUSION.CO.UK

INTERACT

When Web design woes set in, Home Improvement is here to lend a hand

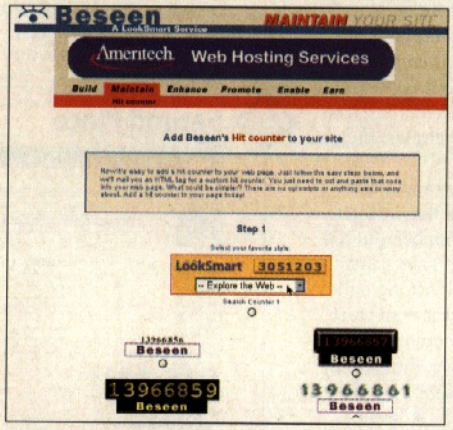
QUESTION TIME

Q **I am responsible for two Web sites, both of which have hit counters provided by Link Exchange. At first, the system was excellent with regular statistics in the form of weekly emails but the service has gradually dwindled. The recorded count seems to vary. At one point the counter of one site read 1017 then a few days later it had fallen to 560. I should be glad to be rid of Link Exchange and use a site based counter by using some HTML code. Can you advise and provide some code please?**

David Gosden

A I'm surprised that you've had problems with Link Exchange's counter, from my experience it provides one of the most reliable free counters available. The period of unreliable service and counter failure may be due to the service recently being incorporated into Microsoft's bCentral service, but if you re-register now things should have stabilised. You can set the new counter to start at a number of your choice. It's not really possible to create a counter based on HTML code as you suggest – you're probably thinking of CGI scripting, which isn't generally available for Web sites based at free ISPs. If you're determined not to return to Link Exchange, take a look at the free counters available from www.beseen.com.

If you've had problems with Link Exchange counters, try the Beseen service, instead



I am rather keen on WAVs and other such sounds, in fact I have rather a lot of them. So many that I think that I could start my own business selling them on the Net. Now most, in fact all, of this was downloaded, is this legal?

Jonny

Plenty of free WAV files are available online from www.wavhounds.com and many other sites on the Net

A Firstly, it's an infringement of copyright to sell other people's music samples for your own profit, especially when they probably infringe copyright in the first place. Illegality aside, you would probably not find success selling music samples on the Net anyway, because so many are freely available.

Q **Do you know of any free ISP's that use Microsoft's FrontPage extensions?**

John A Griffiths.

A An increasing number of free ISPs are offering FrontPage extensions, as they realise it is a popular feature with home page builders. You might want to check out F9's free service, www.f9.co.uk, and Vispa Net at www.vispa.net. If you want to find more, take a look at the Net4Nowt site at www.n4n.co.uk, which has comprehensive listings of what each free ISP has to offer.

Q **I am still a novice as far as Web design is concerned, and have just published a site** www.ukweatherwatch.co.uk. **On my 17-inch monitor the site looks great, but people with smaller monitors complain that the text and graphics are all over the place. Now I know after reading some of your articles that future sites should and will be made up using style sheets. However I would like to revamp the site without the need to recreate every page. Have you any ideas or shortcuts that you can offer?**

John Mitchell

A Believe it or not, part of the problem with your site is that you are already using stylesheets! I can see from your HTML code that Microsoft FrontPage was used to create the site, and it has generated stylesheet layers that position some of the text and graphics on the site very precisely. This precise positioning is fine on your large monitor, but will indeed mean that the site looks strange on a smaller screen. In fact, looking at the site on my Mac's 17" monitor caused problems, because the smaller fonts used by Mac Web browsers also led to text and graphics not appearing in the correct places. If you want to avoid recreating the site, try turning off style sheets in FrontPage, or simply convert the layers into normal sections of the Web page.

SPONSORED BY WEBFUSION
CONTACT SALES ON 0115 917 0000
HTTP://WWW.WEBFUSION.CO.UK

DESIGNDOCTOR

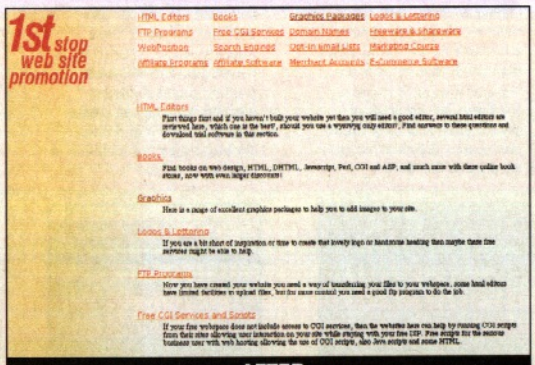
The Design Doctor takes his scalpel to a Web promotion site, taming a frameset and overhauling a colour scheme along the way

On the couch

www.1st-stop-website-promotion.com

Jim Schofield is so dedicated to Web site promotion, he has published his personal hyperlink selection on the Web in the form of this site. Everything from graphics packages to affiliate programs is covered, with information about the individual resources. Unlike most Web promotion resource sites, this one does not have any advertising banners weighing down the pages.

BEFORE



AFTER

FIRST PAGE

Missing images

Jim has made a simple but common mistake in his HTML coding, which means that none of the site's images appear. He has used a backwards slash in the path name for the image, rather than a forwards slash. It's only in the strange world of the PC that backwards slashes exist; seeing as most Web servers run on UNIX, forwards slashes are definitely the order of the Web design day.

Frustrated frameset

The original navigation system was a little confusing. The links down the left-hand side don't actually go to the pages in question, but instead link to the description of that page in the main frame. These links then reload the entire frameset, which is a somewhat inefficient means of using frames. The new design reduces the number of frames to just two, with the links in the top frame sending the user directly to the relevant page of the site.

Mixed messages

Jim included code in some of the links that made a status message appear in the bottom of the browser window, such as 'Click here for HTML editors'. These have been removed because they don't provide new or useful information, and frustrate users who look to the status bar to see the link's URL.

HTML hotspot

A simple stylesheet has been created to make the text in each part of the gallery tables appear in the same font and size. The 'TD' element that is defined, is the standard tag for individual table cells, and this style instruction will therefore have an effect on each cell of the table. This is such a simple implementation of style sheets that it has been incorporated into the <head> section of the HTML file.

```
<style type="text/css">
<!—
TD {font-family: Comic Sans MS; font-size: 14px }
// —>
</style>
```

SECOND PAGE

Colour scheme

The original site doesn't have a particularly coherent colour scheme. When this happens on sites, it can often lead to a confusing visual appearance, and one that will not inspire return visits. The existing haphazard combination of red, blue, green and black has been replaced with a more coherent selection of yellow, red and black. The yellow is used in the background gradient, and could also potentially be used as a table background colour if required. Red has been used for the links and headlines. The difference between these two has been made clear as the links have been underlined.

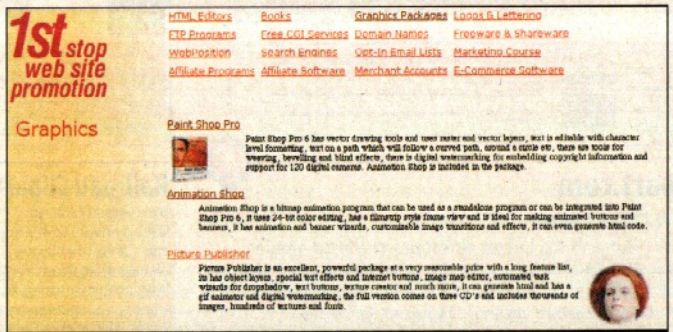
Stylesheet city

As with all the other sites that have been made over by the Design Doctor over these past issues, a style sheet has been created. This serves two purposes and is something that you should definitely do when you're thinking about the design of the site. Stylesheets help make the appearance of the site more consistent, and make the act of updating your site much simpler. For this style sheet, everything relates to the appearance of links – their colour, font face, and size. Thanks to the flexibility of CSS (Cascading Style Sheets, the full name for the techno-wizardry in question) it is possible to have the underlining disappear when the user waves their mouse pointer over the link. This little technique draws attention to the link and makes it look and feel 'clickable'.

Introducing images

Although there's no real need for graphics on this link-oriented site, a couple have been inserted here to make the page look more interesting. As we have often mentioned in the past, always make sure that you don't go overboard with images, or make them too big, otherwise your site will be slow to load.

BEFORE



AFTER

SPONSORED BY WEBFUSION
CONTACT SALES ON 0115 917 0000
HTTP://WWW.WEBFUSION.CO.UK

DYNAMITE DOZEN

This month, we take a look at some graphics sites that will bring out the artist in you! They're perfect for finding images for your Web site

GRAPHICS SITES

1

ArtToday
www.arttoday.com

One of the largest single collections of graphics on the Web, ArtToday is the perfect place to visit for clip art, photographs, fonts and other graphics. The free membership scheme will give you access to 40,000 graphics and photos, and if you're suitably impressed by what it has to offer, full membership starts at $30 per year, and will grant you access to a much larger range of materials plus image conversion and generation services

2

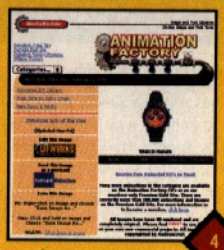
Barry's Clipart Server
www.barrysclipart.com

You'll find one of the best selections of animated GIFs on this site, together with a fairly standard selection of static clip art. The site has also been developed to include useful software and links, together with message boards and much more. The new design that has been implemented in the last few months is a vast improvement on the old one, and the range of material here continues to expand impressively all the time.

3

Clipart.com
www.clipart.com

This site is one of the largest directories of clip art sites on the Net – a veritable Yahoo! for the genre. Sites are ranked by link popularity, with useful explanations so you know what's on offer before visiting. If you can ignore the incredibly annoying selection of animated GIFs, this is the best place to start your clip art travels. In case what you're looking for isn't covered, there are links to other directories and a search facility that links to ArtToday.



4

Animated GIF of the day
www.mediabuilder.com/graphicsagifday.html

Visit this site on a daily basis and you'll soon have a collection of top quality animated GIFs. If the graphic you see isn't quite right, click the 'GIF Works' button to edit it quickly and easily.

5

Inki's Clipart
www.inki.com/clipart

This site offers a very good, but fairly limited, range of funky modern clip art images, which makes a nice change to the staid old material that all too often appears on Web sites. The collection is growing all the time, and submissions are welcomed from other clip art creators.

6

Railroad Clipart
www.ribbonrail.com/art

Quite a specialist offering, this one – an entire clip art archive dedicated to railway images. Every item of rolling stock you could ever dream of is available here in binary form, so if you ever feel the need for a picture of a train on your home page, then this is the place to come.

7

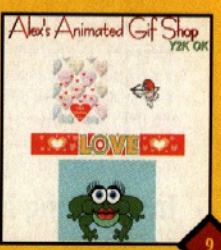
WebPlaces Search
www.webplaces.com/search

If you're having trouble finding an image, this site could be the answer. It helps you search the Net for graphics that match your description using services such as Lycos and Filez. The accuracy of results depends on how closely your search keywords matches the graphic file names.

8

Zidelli Graphics
www.geocities.com/SouthBeach/2177/graphics.html

A good selection of standard and animated GIFs is available, with a particular emphasis on navigational elements such as bullets and graphical horizontal rules. Although not frequently updated or expanded, this site is still well worth a visit.



9

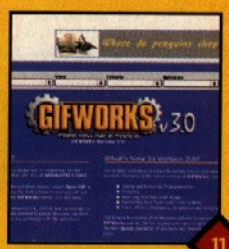
Alex's Animated GIF Shop
www.wsdaents.com

The free selection should satisfy most needs – if not, there's the option to pay $30 for life membership and access to a few thousand animated GIFs. And you can rest assured that this site is apparently Y2K compliant...

10

ZYGraphics
www.zygraphics.com

Want to create custom animated 3D text for your Web site, but don't know where to start? ZYGraphics is the answer. The Web page creation tool is limited in function, but you can create graphics using it and then download them for inclusion in your home page.



11

GIFWorks
www.gifworks.com

This is the ultimate tool for graphic creation and editing, and all the features are free. It feels like you're using an advanced (and expensive) photo editing package, with a cleverly designed Web interface that mimics pull-down menus and other familiar software features.

12

Clip Art
www.clip-art.com

This site brings the best of both worlds: an extensive selection of clip art and links to many other clip art sites. This one is very heavy on adverts, with a banner ad and a separate advert frame making an annoying clutter of what is otherwise a well-designed page.

vzones

LIFE IN THE ZONES

Tim was screwed.

He needed to be at JavaDiva's apartment in five minutes and he was stuck in real life.

thus™

www.virtualzones.co.uk

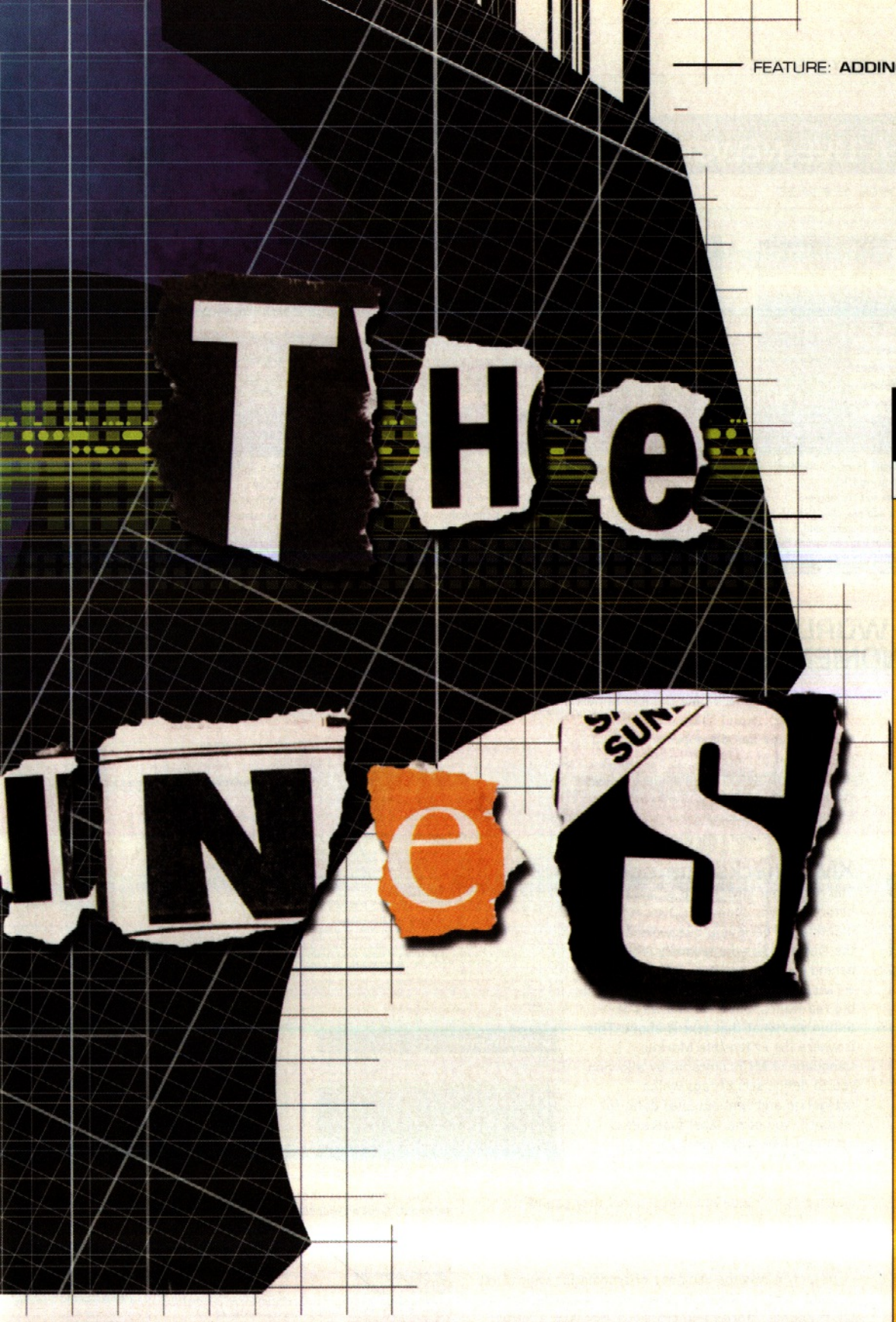
THE NET JUST GOT PERSONAL - THE ULTIMATE AVATAR COMMUNITY

MAKING HEADLINES

If you want to add a bit of topical spice to the content of your Web site, then syndication's the way to go. **NICK SWEENEY** takes a look at some of the sites that provide content for you to use on your own pages

On the Web, the killer application will always be the link. It wasn't the world of eCommerce which turned the Web from an underground retreat into a global phenomenon, but its power to connect people, by placing information just a mouse-click away. Since the first browsers, people have sought ways to link faster, and link smarter. As the amount of raw data online increases, it's been up to bookmarks, search engines and portals to guide you. Now, though, it's possible to reach the content that's important to you, whether it's the latest news headlines or the weather in Peru, without having to go out and look for it. All these examples and more, can become a part of your site, through the power of syndication.

But why bother? Well, as the software guru Dave Winer (**www.scripting.com**) says: "The thing that's so wonderful about the Web is that it's so easy to put up a Web site. And the thing that's so frustrating about the Web is that it can be hard to get people to come and look at your stuff." Using syndicated content is a great way to make people come back to your pages, because it gives them access to material that's not only relevant, but that's regularly updated. And the technologies



behind syndication give you the opportunity to share your own content with others, providing a valuable link back to your site.

Aggregation without aggravation

If you've ever used one of the main portal sites, you'll know that they make a big deal about the ways in which users can customise the content and appearance of what they see online. The pulling power of these sites, as seen in personalised front pages such as http://my.yahoo.com and http://my.netscape.com doesn't necessarily come from the services that the sites themselves provide, but from the ways that they gather a range of relevant information based on your personal data and preferences. You could find everything freely available elsewhere online. The portals' strength, though, lies in its ability to 'aggregate' this syndicated content and let users filter through to what they need.

Syndication and aggregation used to be confined to the heavyweights of traditional media: a reminder of the days when newspapers got the bulk of their stories over tickers fed in from Reuters and other agencies. Nowadays, while that sort of relationship still drives big ➤

Huh?!

ALL OF THOSE CONFUSING TERMS EXPLAINED

Aggregation
The collection, categorisation and display of syndicated feeds in a single place. Portal sites are classic aggregators; some sites such as moreover.com and my.userland.com also let individuals use feeds on their own pages.

CDF
The Channel Definition Format – an early incarnation of XML formatting used to deliver 'push' channels, which forms the basis of Web-based syndication formats.

Feeds/channels
A general term for the syndicated content that individual sites provide through RSS files or other formats.

Metadata
Tags which label the content and context of data, rather than its layout and appearance. This is used in syndication to label headlines, links and descriptions.

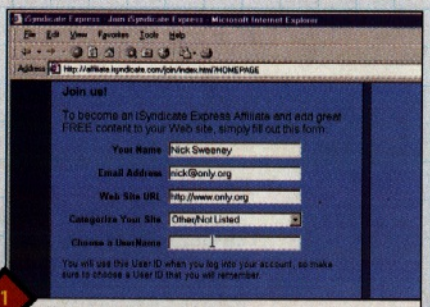
RDF and RSS
The Resource Description Framework (RDF) allows you to label sites with XML metadata; Rich Site Summaries (RSS) use a simplified version of this format, which is specifically designed to describe channels for syndication.

Syndication
The sharing of information across the Web though feeds and channels, usually in a format which allows users to customise the appearance and layout of that information after it has been retrieved.

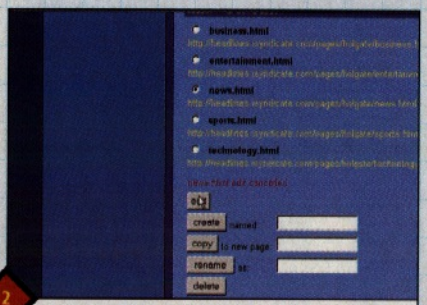
XML
The eXtensible Markup Language, which allows users to define sets of tags for documents such as Web pages, so that they can be labelled and organised according to structure and content, rather than the appearance-based markup of HTML.

HOW TO ADD A LIVE NEWSFEED TO YOUR WEB SITE

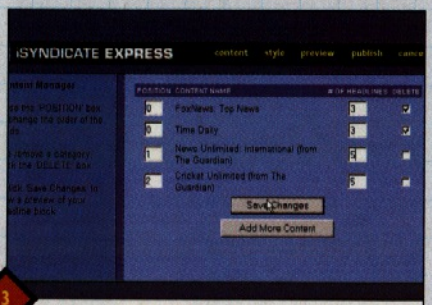
HOW TO INSTALL ISYNDICATE FEEDS ON YOUR PAGES



1 Before you can use the iSyndicate feeds, you'll need to register by going to the following URL: **http://express.isyndicate.com** and clicking on 'Join'. Enter your name, email address, the URL of your site, select the category it falls under, and choose a username. You'll be sent your password by email, which lets you login to the site proper.



2 Once you've logged in, the 'Headlines' link lets you create a 'headline block' for your site. You can choose from pre-selected categories ranging from news and sport to entertainment and technology. Click on the radio button for the block you're interested in (we've picked news) and select 'Edit': you'll then see the default selection of headlines.



3 If you're anything like us, you'll be far more interested in the cricket score than what's happening in the Presidential race, so click on 'Content'. This button lets you delete the channels you don't want, and add additional feeds. You can also alter the number of headlines you receive, and the position of each channel.

IT WASN'T THE WORLD OF ECOMMERCE WHICH TURNED THE WEB INTO A GLOBAL PHENOMENON, BUT ITS POWER TO PASS ON INFORMATION

portals, the ease at which the Net allows you to organise and share data means that everyone has the opportunity to provide and make use of syndicated material, without encountering the high subscription costs associated with traditional services.

XML marks the spot

You might not have heard of XML before, but you soon will. Over recent months, it's become a buzzword around the Net, and it's the technology that's behind syndication. It's used because HTML may be good at displaying text in big red italics, but it has no way of telling you what that text is about. This is where the eXtensible Markup Language (XML) comes in, by allowing you to define sets of tags which categorise and contextualise data: for instance, you could label footballers with tags like <defender> or <goalkeeper>. It's then possible to create a list of rules to process these categories of 'metadata'. Once done, they can be used across Web pages, databases, and other applications, without having to wrestle with different – often incompatible – file formats.

In fact, it was the demands of syndication which first brought XML to the Web, since it allowed publishers to tag headlines, stories and cross-references in a format that could be easily updated and sent to subscribers. A few years ago, this 'push' technology was regarded as the Next Big Thing online, based around channels that delivered regularly updated content straight to your desktop. While the concept never caught on (few people had permanent high-bandwidth connections) the underlying Channel Definition Format (CDF) evolved into the basis of today's Web-based syndication.

Rich and famous

When Netscape launched its own personalised portal (http://my.netscape.com) last spring, what set it apart from the competition was that it provided a format for users to contribute their own syndicated content alongside the usual array of news, local weather reports, and daily horoscopes. This Rich Site Summary

Moreover (www.moreover.com) offers an easy, three-step process to getting its feeds on your site

An example of some of the stories that you can find on the Moreover Web site

TOP TEN SYNDICATION SITES

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN SYNDICATION, VISIT THESE SITES

1. **Moreover News**
   www.moreover.com/topstories
   News, news and even more news from Moreover's international feeds.
2. **Accuweather**
   http://express.isyndicate.com/drop_in/accuweather.html
   A simple search box which lets users check the weather, wherever they are.
3. **Google Websearch**
   http://services.google.com/cobrand/free_trial
   Stick this top-notch search engine on your own front page.
4. **Q Online**
   www.qonline.co.uk/musicwirefeed.asp
   News, gig reviews, and industry gossip from the online music mag.
5. **Slashdot**
   http://slashdot.org/slashdot.rdf
   Slashdot's 'news for nerds' is one of the most widely syndicated feeds on the Web.

Without protection...

...your name is fair game

As more and more customers turn to the Internet to seek information a simple and descriptive domain name becomes a vital part of your business strategy.

But in two hundred countries linked by the web, speculators are registering names as an investment - certain of the fact that one day these names will sell-on for a high price.

There is nothing you can do about it except get in first and protect your name.

Magic Moments offers the most comprehensive and competitively priced set of Internet services available and specialises in domain name registration. We can protect your name, your brands and your trademarks in every corner of the net and ensure that your site is always on-line for business.

Call us today and get all the protection you need.

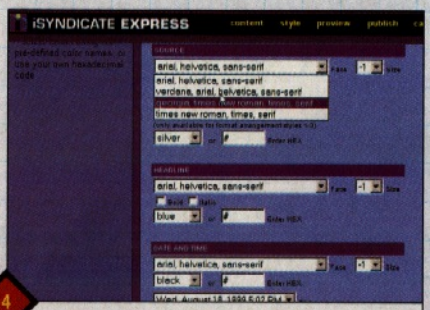
Freephone: 0808 100 6200
www.magic-moments.com

MAGIC
MOMENTS
Our business is to serve you

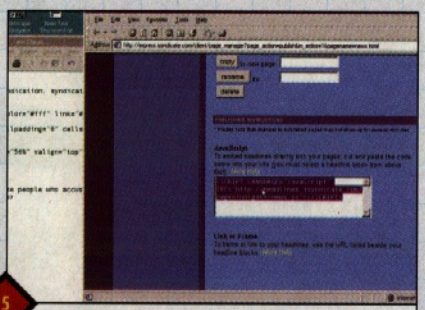
For information on our packages and prices e-mail us, call the freephone number above or see our advertisements in the Internet press.
Magic Moments Internet plc Email: enquiries@magic-moments.com Terms: http://www.magic-moments.com/terms/

HOW TO ADD A LIVE NEWSFEED TO YOUR WEB SITE (CONT)

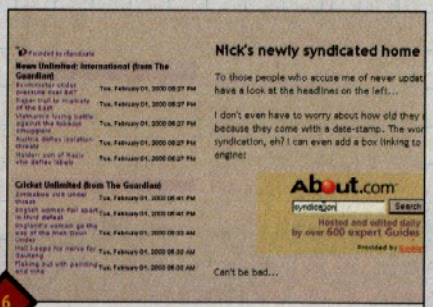
HOW TO INSTALL ISYNDICATE FEEDS ON YOUR PAGES



4 Once you're happy with the content of your headline block, you can alter the way it will look on your page, by clicking on the 'Style' button. There are seven pre-defined layouts to choose from; in addition, you can adjust the date format as well as the font size and colour for each element in the block. Click on 'Save' for a preview of what your customised headlines will look like.



5 Once you've finished tweaking the look of your headline viewer, click on 'Publish' to return to the login screen, and re-select the radio button for the file you've just edited. A block of HTML code will appear in the text window at the bottom of the page: simply copy this across into the page that you want to display the headlines, using Notepad or your favourite HTML editor.



6 Once you've put your edited page online, it should automatically load up the headline block you prepared earlier. You may need to fiddle with the page layout to get it looking good, but once that's done, you can go back to iSyndicate and choose more items. We've added a box which lets you run a search on About.com, but there's plenty more to choose from!

THE SIMPLEST WAY TO ADD FEEDS AND CHANNELS TO YOUR PAGES IS TO GO TO AGGREGATOR SITES WHICH COLLECT STORIES AND HEADLINES

(RSS), based on another format called RDF, is simply a set of XML rules which uses easy-to-remember tags such as <item>, <title> and <description> to summarise the content of sites. To syndicate this content, you simply create a file that uses RDF or RSS format to describe what's on your site, and tell people where to look for it. For instance, here's an excerpt from Slashdot.org's RDF summary page (**www.slashdot.org/slashdot.rdf**):

```
<item>
<title>Autonomous Robot Explores
Antarctica</title>
<link>http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=00/01/31/093
4221</link>
</item>
```

Your browser can't do much with this (though IE5 gives it colourful formatting), but then again it's not really meant to, because these tags label content and not appearance. They are also designed to be processed by other programs. This means RSS files can be easily converted to HTML and used in Web pages, or downloaded by standalone applications such as Carmen's Headline Viewer. This versatility has made RSS the standard format for syndication. There are now thousands of sites registered with sites like my.netscape.com and **www.xmltree.com**, offering channels and feeds of headlines and page summaries that you can freely incorporate into your sites. And how do you do that? Read on...

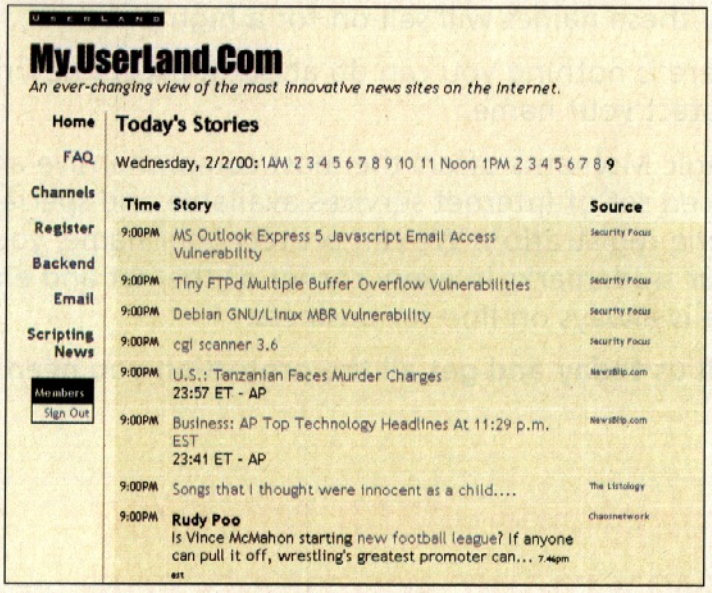
Picking and choosing

We've already seen how XML formats such as RSS make it easy for content providers to serve up information across the Web, but you're probably wondering how you can put it to use. It's all very well being able to customise the channels on personal portals like my.netscape.com, but ideally, you want to be able to pick and choose feeds, and then make them a part of your own pages.

In general terms, this is one of the few occasions where an HTML editor and FTP client isn't going to be enough. What's needed here is something which regularly checks the RSS files of the sites you want to use for updates, and then converts their XML tags into HTML to suit your own site design. It's fairly tricky to do by hand, but fortunately, there are plenty of tools designed to make life easier for you.

Self-service syndication

Right now, the simplest way to add feeds and channels to your pages is to go to aggregator sites such as Moreover (**www.moreover.com**) and iSyndicate, which collect headlines and stories from thousands of sources and convert them into a range of digestible HTML formats. With both of these sites, you don't have to worry about doing the conversion from XML. By



TOP 10 SYNDICATION SITES

IF YOU'RE INTERESTED IN SYNDICATION, VISIT THESE SITES

6 **Football News**
www.moreover.com/soccer
From news and rumours through the week, through to Saturday's scores.

7 **CNET News**
http://my.netscape.com/preview.tmpl?services=technews
Visit CNET for computer news, reviews and tips.

8 **Salon**
www.salon.com/feed/RDF/salon_use.rdf
Great coverage of culture, entertainment and current affairs at this classy American site.

9 **The Register**
http://alchemy.openjava.org/rss/register.rdf
So much Net news is dull, predictable and American. The Register is none of these.

10 **Cyberculture Digest**
www.moreover.com/cyberculture
Feed your cyber-craving while waiting for next month's Practical Internet!

ORBITALNET

Your Internet Partner

Domain Name Registration | Website Hosting & Design | NT or UNIX with MS Fontpage
Excellent Reseller Scheme Deals | COWS E-Commerce Hosting | ASP & Database Support
Server Co-location | Leased Line Access | 56k & ISDN Dial up accounts | Web Control Panel

Deal 1

Domain Registration
Unlimited Email Fowarding
Unlimited Web Fowarding

£75+Vat

Deal 2

Domain Registration
50mb Web space
5 PoP 3 Accounts
FP Extensions
Web Admin Panel
Unlimited Mail Forwarding

£129+Vat

Deal 3

Domain Registration
100mb Webspace
Unlimited Email
FP Extensions
ASP Support
Database Support
Web Admin Panel
Unlimited Mail forwarding

£249+Vat

Free Digital Camera with Package 3.
*While Stocks Last

Call Now on 0800 3891397 or visit www.orbitalnet.co.uk

Company Registered in England & Wales no 376505 All Users accept our Terms & Conditions @ www.orbitalnet.co.uk

10 TOP SYNDICATION LINKS

IF YOU WANT MORE INFORMATION, VISIT THESE SITES

1. **My Netscape Channel Guide**
http://my.netscape.com/publish/
Netscape created RSS: they're still the best source of information for beginners.

2. **Userland**
http://my.userland.com/channels
Not just a repository for nearly 200 feeds, but a great place to learn about syndication in practice.

3. **Carmen's Headline Viewer**
www.vertexdev.com/HeadlineViewer/
Look, no browsers: this useful app (currently in free beta) fetches syndicated headlines from all the main registries.

4. **XMLTree**
www.xmltree.com
Nearly 1000 XML feeds sorted into categories, and plenty of technical assistance on how to use them.

5. **StartsHere**
theweb.startshere.net
A content accumulator linked to XMLTree, which uses RSSMaker (see below) to syndicate sites which don't provide feeds of their own.

6. **Internet Alchemy**
internetalchemy.org/rss/index.phtml
Home of RSSMaker, a brilliant tool for generating RSS feeds from ordinary Web pages.

7. **Why Would You Use RSS?**
http://webreview.com/pub/1999/10/29/feature/index2b.html
A good summary of the benefits of syndication, with plenty of useful links.

8. **Moreover**
www.moreover.com
Over 1500 feeds in over 200 categories, freely available to users in various XML and HTML formats.

9. **WebReference**
www.webreference.com/perl/tutorial/8/
A great in-depth tutorial if you want to process feeds on your own Web server.

10. **PerlXML**
www.perlxml.com
Lots of tools to create and process web feeds, and not just in Perl.

registering with them (it's free), you can do the customisation through the Web. All that's left for you to do is add the relevant feeds by copying and pasting a few lines of HTML into your pages.

iSyndicate has about 500 text-based channels on offer, but it also lets you add updated photos and facilities such as a search engine to your site (see our walkthrough for details). You just select the channels you want, edit the layout and copy across the block of code generated by the site. With Moreover, you go through a similar three-stage process. First, you select which of its 1,500 feeds you'd like to appear on your site; then you choose a layout, defining the column width, colours and fonts for the headlines. Finally, you paste a simple tag into your own site, which uses JavaScript to call up your customised feeds. And to make it even simpler, there's a selection of pre-defined layouts to choose from.

USING SYNDICATED CONTENT IS A GREAT WAY TO MAKE SURE THAT PEOPLE KEEP RETURNING TO YOUR SITE

Getting geeky with it

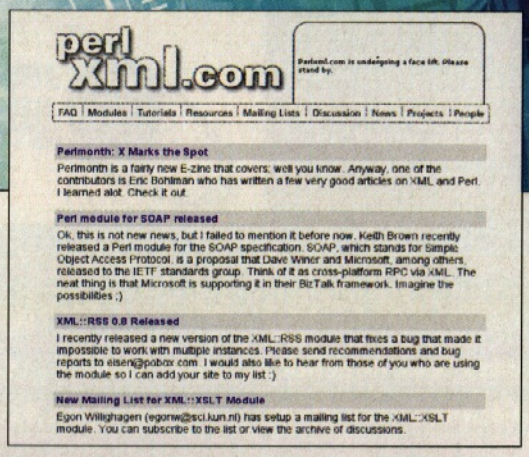
Want something a little bit different from news headlines and sports scores? It's probably worth looking at some of the other main sites which deal with syndicated content. Californian software designer, Dave Winer, was one of the first to encourage ordinary users to register their channels, and there are now nearly 200 regularly-updated feeds on his Userland site. These range from technology tips to Canadian obituaries. You can either view them together at my.userland.com, or add individual channels to your site though a simple Javascript tag (you can get the details at www.wc.cc.va.us/dtod/includeChannel/default.asp).

If you're seriously into syndication, and your Web server can deal with CGI scripts, then it's definitely worth checking out the Perl tutorials at WebReference (www.webreference.com/perl/tutorial/8). While Perl isn't suited for absolute beginners, it's fairly easy to edit the scripts and modules that are already available so that they work on your own sites. Alternatively, if you don't mind shelling out a few quid, there are a couple of excellent applications which do all the hard work for you, such as Anaconda Software's Clipper (www.anaconda.net).

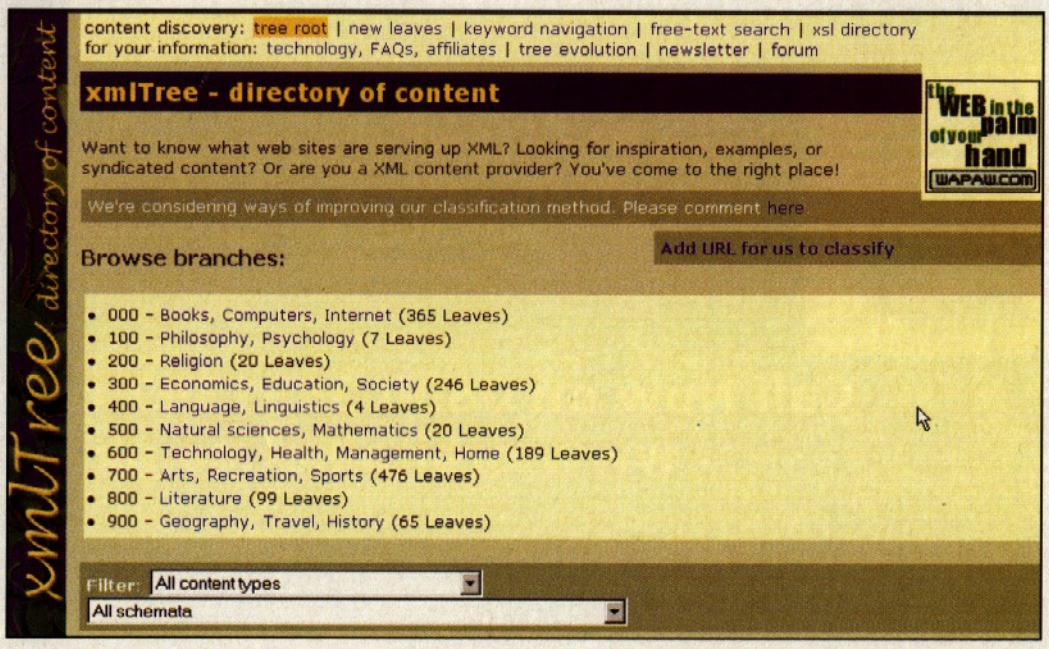
Share and enjoy

Using syndicated content is a great way to make your site 'sticky' – with the promise of regular updates, you can be sure that users will make return visits. But there's another way to use syndication to drive traffic to your pages, and that's by creating your own feed. If you have the kind of site that works well with syndication (that is, one with regularly-updated headlines and articles), you can find lots of links to RSS Channel Editors at PerlXML (www.perlxml.com), which saves you the arduous task of having to edit and update files by hand.

Once you've got a RSS file for your site, you can tell the world about it, and keep your fingers crossed that people will start linking back to you. After all, that's what the Web's all about!



Find out what sites have XML from the xmlTree, found at www.xmltree.com



THE WORLD'S LARGEST UK DOMAIN REGISTRAR*

FREEPHONE 0800 731 4780

UK DOMAINS: £11.50PA

Includes all Nominet Fees

Set-up fee £29 (one off)

FREE LIFETIME EMAIL AND WEB FORWARDING

Use your domain name from day one.
Have it pointed at your free web space and receive email.

100MB COMMERCIAL WEB SPACE, UK DOMAIN: £99PA

Includes all Nominet Fees.
Options for Microsoft Front Page.
No set-up fees.

Clients include Virgin Net Limited, OFTEL, Cadbury, Samsung, MORI, Friends Provident

www.nicnames.co.uk

NicNames - Leased Line Access Provider Established December 1997.
*We registered more UK domains in March, April and May 1999 than any Nominet member.
Prices exclude VAT. All clients agree to our terms and conditions. **Price correct at time of going to press. All trade and service marks are acknowledged.

You can claim one of our seven great FREE GOODIES and SAVE 25% on the cover price of the magazine!

SUBSC

GET ONE OF THESE FREE!

PLEASE NOTE THERE IS A £2.00 POST AND PACKING CHARGE FOR THE FREE GIFT YOU CHOOSE

Xoom Web Page Power Pack

YOU'LL find virtually everything you need to create high impact Web pages quickly and easily with this superb CD. It's a suite of powerful Web tools that let you create and maintain your Web pages like the professionals! It includes Web Snake, a set of Internet tools you can use to download a Web site for offline browsing, Gif Animator, a GIF compression tool, Web Site Starter Kit, a collection of more than 50 complete Web sites for you to use, and Byte Catcher, a download/ upload program.

Web Page Multimedia Pack

THIS CD gives you all the capabilities you need to create the marvellous multimedia content you've always wanted. The easy to use interface lets you add photos, videos and audio .wav files to any Web site with the minimum of hassle. The photo editing tool lets you crop, size, add edge effects and even change resolution and resample imagery. For video, you get 103 dazzling transition effects, 51 video filters, APS 16 bit plug in support, plus a Multimedia converter and screen capture program.

Web Site Templates

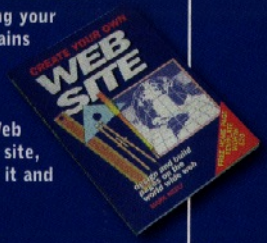
Here's 250 Web templates to jump start your site. Each template includes a home page, 19 commonly used sub pages, a configurable navigation bar, and email links – all in a variety of themes and styles. That's 1,500 themed navigation elements, headers, and backgrounds and over 4,500 Web pages! There are also over 10,000 images to enhance your site including 7,000 animated GIFs, 1,000 photos, and 3,000 Web objects. Create your site in minutes with this superb package.

Web Clip Empire

HERE'S 150,000 fast loading animations, sounds, designs, and more on six CDs! Along with animated GIFs, you get JPEGs, still GIFs, 5,200 music tracks and sound effects, plus 13,800 Java buttons, photos and videos. There's something for everyone, every style and every taste. It also comes with the powerful CompuPic browser. As a further bonus, all the images are royalty free so you can use them for whatever reason on pages throughout your Web site.

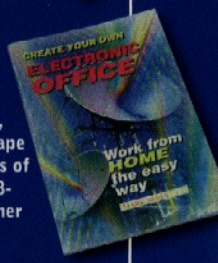
Create Your Own Web Site

The complete guide to building your site. This 114 page book explains what free tools are available, how to create your own dazzling graphics, where to get free Web space to house your site, and how to promote it and attract other Net users to visit it.



Create Your Own Electronic Office

Home business, cottage industry, small office. Whatever term you use, operating from home means you escape the stresses, pressures and overheads of a busy city or town office. This 98-page book helps you decide whether home working is for you.



Find What You Want On The Internet

Which techniques and search engines work the best? What is the real difference between search sites and directories? How do you choose which to use? Are there any special tricks that will help you find what you want faster? It's all in this 114-page book.

RIBE

Save 25% and get one of these CDs or books FREE!

Call our credit card hotline on 01202 200200

PRACTICAL INTERNET

PRACTICAL INTERNET SUBSCRIPTIONS FORM

PLEASE TICK WHICH SUBSCRIPTION YOU REQUIRE:

- ☐ UK £36
- ☐ Europe £40
- ☐ Rest of World £46

CHOOSE ONE OF THESE FREE GIFTS
(ADD £2.00 FOR POST AND PACKING)

- ☐ Xoom Web Page Power Pack
- ☐ Web Site Templates
- ☐ Web Page Multimedia Pack
- ☐ Web Clip Empire
- ☐ Book: Create Your Own Web Site
- ☐ Book: Create Your Own Electronic Office
- ☐ Book: Find What You Want On The Internet

ENTER THE ISSUE NUMBER FROM WHEN YOU WANT YOUR SUBSCRIPTION TO START: _____

PERSONAL DETAILS:

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

Postcode: .....

Telephone No: .....

Email: .....

METHOD OF PAYMENT:

Please indicate your choice of method

☐ CHEQUE Please make payable to Paragon Publishing Ltd.

☐ CREDIT CARD

☐ Access ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Switch

Card number:
☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ | ☐☐☐ (Switch only)

Expiry date: ☐☐/☐☐

Issue No. ☐☐ (Switch only)

Signature: .....

YOUR DETAILS:

1. Age:

- ☐ 10-16
- ☐ 17-20
- ☐ 21-30
- ☐ 31-45
- ☐ 46-60
- ☐ 60+

2. Sex:

.....

3. Occupation:

.....

4. How many people read your copy of the magazine?

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5
- ☐ More

5. Please indicate your other interests:

- ☐ Sports
- ☐ Cinema/Theatre
- ☐ Music, CDs/Concerts
- ☐ Travel/Holidays
- ☐ Computer games/Leisure
- ☐ Education/Reading
- ☐ Science Fiction
- ☐ The Internet

6. What other magazines do you read? Please state:

.....

.....

Please return this coupon or a photocopy of it (together with your cheque/PO if applicable, made payable to Paragon Publishing Ltd) in an envelope to: Practical Internet Subs, Paragon Publishing Ltd, FREEPOST (BH 1255), Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 2TA. It won't cost you a penny in stamps if posted in the UK. Alternatively, call our credit card hotline on 01202 200200, fax your details on 01202 200217 or email us at subs@paragon.co.uk.

From time to time, Paragon sends out news about exciting new products and opportunities that are of interest to readers. If you do not wish to receive such information, please tick this box. ☐

www.get-your.co.uk

GET-
YOUR
COUK

or your .com!

Online Domain Name Registration

includes:

Real-Time Online Setup
Web & Email Forwarding
Optional Holding Webpage
Free Email Autoresponder
Easy web-based administration
Domain Registration fees

2nd year free

www.get-your.co.uk

WebFusion™
Part of the WebFusion Group

WEBFUSION WELCOME

Surf to ↑
OR CALL 0115 9170000

SPONSORED BY DATA BECKER
CONTACT SALES ON
01420 22707
DATA BECKER
WWW.DATABECKER.CO.UK

SITESEER

Fabulous sites for your pleasure

LIFESTYLE **CLUBBING** .....page 74

SPORTS **FORMULA 1** .....page 76

FACTUAL **HISTORY** .....page 78

essential clicks

Search Engines .....page 74
Software Downloads .....page 74
Shopping Malls .....page 76
Software Firms .....page 76
News .....page 78
Out and About .....page 78

Essential clicks

SOME OF THE BEST SITES WHICH YOU WILL RETURN TO AGAIN AND AGAIN

SEARCH ENGINES

ALTAVISTA
www.altavista.co.uk

DEJANEWS
www.dejanews.com

EUROSEEK
www.euroseek.net/

EXCITE
www.excite.co.uk

FOUR11
www.four11.com

GO TO
www.go2.com

HOTBOT
www.hotbot.com

INFOSEEK
www.infoseek.com

LYCOS
www.lycos.co.uk

SEARCH UK
www.searchUK.co.uk

UKONLINE
www.ukonline.com

WEBCRAWLER
www.webcrawler.com

YAHOO! UK & IRELAND
www.yahoo.co.uk

SOFTWARE DOWNLOADS

COOL TOOL
www.cooltool.com

DAVE CENTRAL
www.davecentral.com

DOWNLOAD.COM
www.download.com

FREEWARE.COM
www.freeware.com

FREEHOUND.COM
www.freehound.com

JUMBO SHAREWARE
www.jumbo.com

SHAREWARE.COM
www.shareware.com

SLAUGHTERHOUSE
www.slaughterhouse.com

SOFTSEEK
www.softseek.com

TOP SOFT
www.topsoft.com/

TUCOWS
www.tucows.com

ULTIMATE MACINTOSH
http://users.aol.com/myee/umac.html

WINDOWS 98
www.microsoft.com/windows2000

LIFESTYLE CLUBBING

MINISTRY OF SOUND

URL: www.ministryofsound.com
In a nutshell: UK's best known club wiggles its online booty

Clubbed to death

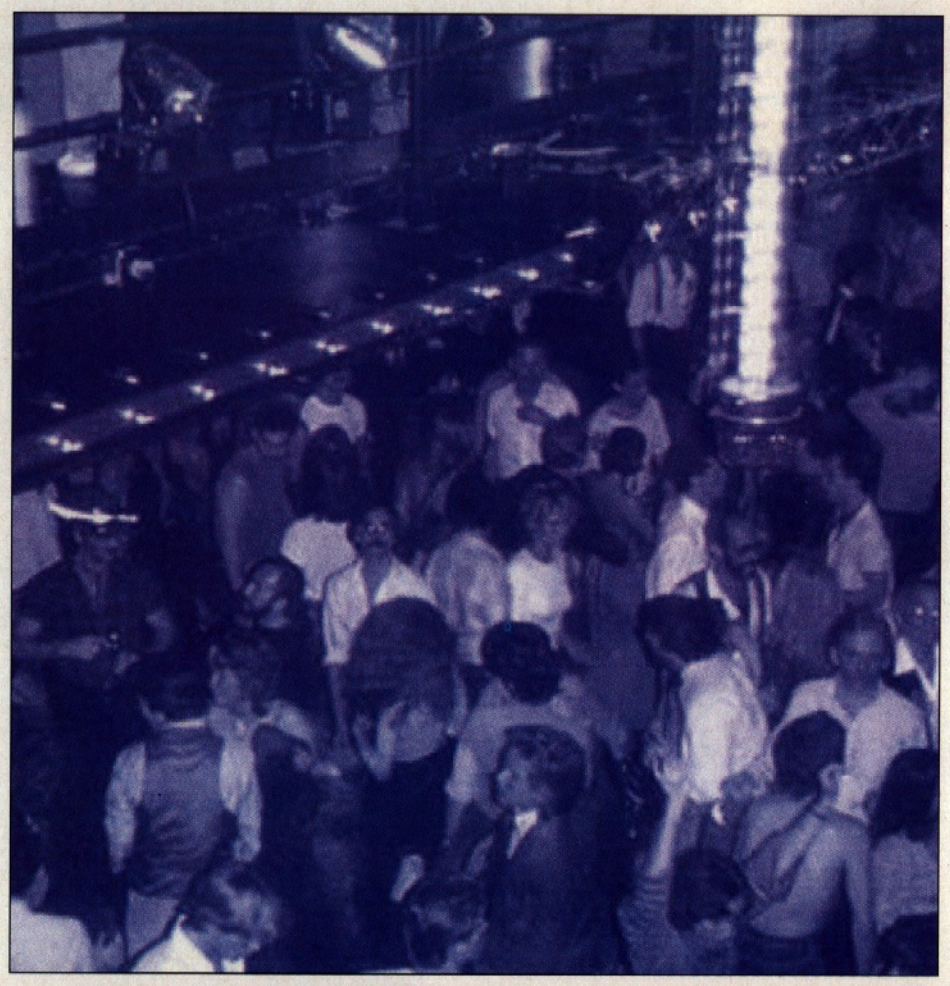
EVEN if you don't know anything about clubbing, the odds are you'll have heard of the Ministry Of Sound. There's the ISP, the CD's, the clothing, the magazine and now the Web site. Oh and there's the nightclub as well.

Clubbing over the last five years has become big business and the MOS has exploited this boom successfully. It has built its reputation as one of the best clubs through the continued quality of house and garage music played by the world's best DJs, combined with the, then futuristic, standard of clubbing environment afforded to its patrons. It was also the first club to get branded compilation albums in record shops.

Since this initial clubbing boom, Cream, Gatecrasher, Hard Times and now Fabric have all become huge commercial enterprises in their own right and clubland's clamour for disposable income has never been higher. This is another way of saying that the innocent days of jumping around in a tent situated just off the M4 near Bristol are, unfortunately, over for good.

Dance nation

But what about Ministry's site? Well it's exactly as you would expect – slick, polished very user-friendly and packed full of all the latest clubbing and dance music information. It's no surprise to see other Ministry products being heavily plugged on the site. There's a good interface here which shows the advantages to be had in keeping things simple and organised. One big bonus is that unlike other club sites, MOS doesn't fall into the trap of using loads of irritating plug-ins, so that your browsing experience takes on the same momentum as wading through treacle. It's a pretty fast site too, with plenty of vibrant content that fits in perfectly with the MOS ethos. The features are really top quality, with the ability to listen to live radio streaming courtesy of top DJs, watch clips from Ministry's Web TV and download over a selection of the hottest top club tracks. Multimedia fans will certainly be in club heaven. However, although it is classy and designed well, you're still left with the distinct impression you've been looking at one big advert rather than had a really rewarding experience. ◆◆◆◆◆

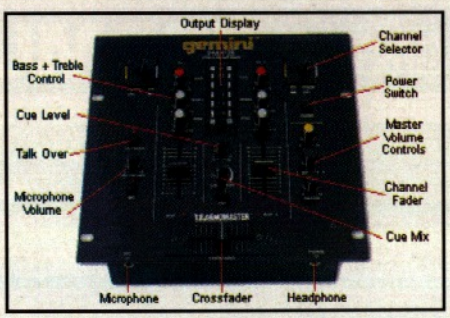


NETMIX

URL: www.netmix.com/bpm
In a nutshell: DJ resource that'll have you spinning records like Pete Tong

Essential mix

NO club would be able to function without the DJ. In this day and age of super DJs like Carl Cox and Judge Jules, it has never been a better career option. Netmix is a magnificent site with plenty of advice on equipment, mixing and advanced techniques. There's even a forum where you can help people out with their turntable problems. Don't worry about beating your head against the wall in frustration, you'll learn how to beatmatch in no time.



Netmix pulls the record out of the box, rips the crossfader across and delivers a killer mix of info and advice to aspiring Derrick Carters and indeed Tony Blackburns. The perfect site to find out how to spin those wheels of steel. ◆◆◆◆◆

THE PARADISE GARAGE

URL: www.geocities.com/Hotsprings/1392/ParadiseGarage.html
In a nutshell: Loving tribute to a great club

Garage days revisited

ANYBODY with a serious interest in the history of club music will enjoy this tribute to New York's legendary Paradise Garage.

Run by the late, great soul producer Larry Levan (pictured), the Paradise Garage had it's heydey in the late Seventies and early Eighties, becoming famous for it's eclectic mix of uplifting soul music, underground disco and early garage classics.

An excellent tribute to both the club and Levan, the site recaptures those halcyon days with a series of eye-witness accounts and treats us to Levan's entire discography. Not a great designed Web site, but far more soul than MOS. Incidentally, it was the legacy of this club that provided garage music with its name.

◆◆◆◆◆

STUDIO 54

URL: http://lowgo.com/54
In a nutshell: Tributes to New York's most outrageous club

The last days of disgust

STUDIO 54 is the equal of the Paradise Garage in legend, but more renowned for its hedonism and as a playground for the rich and famous.

Having been bombarded with a soundtrack album, book and film of the club over the past 18 months, we could be excused for feeling a little bored with Studio 54. Indeed the club represented the attitude side of clubbing – drugs, posing and outrageous behaviour – and the music was purely incidental. Of course a visit to this site will fill you in on the sordid details and then some. Again the design is not particularly special, but there are plenty of images of the club's patrons like Debbie Harry (pictured) which just about save Studio 54 from Room 101.

◆◆◆◆◆

GATECRASHER

URL: www.gatecrasher.co.uk
In a nutshell: Nice site from this Sheffield superclub, but too clinical

Sheffield wheels of steel

GATECRASHER has become a real flavour of the moment among the UK's glam clubbers and like the aforementioned Ministry of Sound could justifiably be described as a super club.

Which means that it's all about selling a product and getting people to buy into a lifestyle, so we get a site that's heavy on flash and branding which serves more as an extension of the existing product than anything else.

It's not a great site for people who aren't already Gatecrasher fans and offers very little in the way of features, multimedia and other features.

Possibly the best thing here is the area of the site where revellers who spent New Year's Eve at the club can email in their pictures and have them put online.

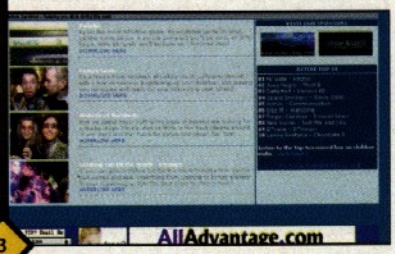
Like the club everything looks very nice on the outside, but this site is superficial and lacking in any real thrills. Good graphics, though. ◆◆◆◆◆

Best of the rest

MORE CLUBS AND RESOURCES TO KEEP YOU AWAY FROM THE DREADED MACARENA

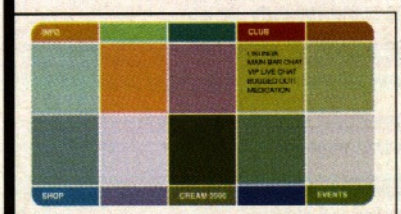
1 **Move On Up**
www.move.u-net.com
Move On Up is one of the UK's top Northern Soul nights and is a based at the splendid Underground club in Leeds

2 **Stringfellows**
www.stringfellows.co.uk
What can we say about nookie legend Peter Stringfellow? He's got money, women, bad hair and a great Web site



3 **Clubber UK**
www.clubber.co.uk
This portal is dedicated to informing us where and when the vibe is going off. It's a one-stop resource for club listings, links and news

4 **SS7X7 Sound System**
www.ss7x7.com
How about mixing your own music online? Not the finished product by a long shot, but a lot of fun. You'll be the new Larry Levan in no time



5 **Cream**
ww.cream.co.uk
A disappointing Web site for a so-called 'Superclub'. Overloaded with plug-ins and with very little content

SPONSORED BY DATA BECKER
CONTACT SALES ON 01420 22707
DATA BECKER WWW.DATABECKER.CO.UK

Essential clicks

SOME OF THE BEST SITES WHICH YOU WILL RETURN TO AGAIN AND AGAIN

SHOPPING MALLS

BEST OF BRITISH
www.thebestofbritish.com

BRITISH SHOPPING MALL
www.britshop.com

I WANT TO SHOP
www.iwanttoshop.com/

THE MARKET CROSS
www.marketcross.com

MARKETNET
www.mkn.co.uk

NETSHOPPING
www.netshopping.co.uk

ONESTORE
www.one.store.co.uk

SCI-FI UK SUPERSTORE
www.scifi-uk.com

SHOPGUIDE
www.shopguide.co.uk

SHOPPERS UNIVERSE
www.shoppersuniverse.com

THE SHOPPING PAVILION
www.vossnet.co.uk/shopping

THE UK SHOPPING CITY
www.ukshops.co.uk

WEBLINKS LTD
www.weblinks.co.uk

SOFTWARE FIRMS

ADOBE
www.adobe.com

EUDORA
www.eudora.com

IBM
www.ibm.com

INTEL
www.intel.co.uk

JASC
www.jasc.com

MACROMEDIA
www.macromedia.co.uk

MICROSOFT
www.microsoft.co.uk

NETSCAPE
home.netscape.com

REALNETWORKS
www.real.com

SAUSAGE
www.sausage.com

SOFTQUAD
www.sq.com

SUN MICROSYSTEMS
www.sun.co.uk

WWW CONSORTIUM
www.w3.org

SPORTS FORMULA 1

ITV FORMULA 1

URL: www.itv-f1.com
In a nutshell: Who cares if the coverage isn't the same as the BBC

Winning formula

THIS month's Siteseer Sports has shifted up a gear. We've abandoned gentile pursuits like cricket (issue 38) and climbed into the cockpit for a quick burn around the formula one circuit.

With the new season underway, ITV's Web site is an excellent resource for dedicated fans. The news section is comprehensive and gives you all the hard facts in the run up to a big race. Once the dust has settled and the chequered flag has been waved, you'll find drivers' reactions and their opinions on the more controversial moments of the race. And when the engines aren't revving, ITV's site keeps you posted on all the friendships and fall outs going on behind the scenes. In fact, in the multi-million pound circus that is formula one, there is a seemingly endless supply of tantalising tittle-tattle. If this sounds like your cup of engine oil, steer your browser to the 'F1 Insider' section. Here you'll find the latest gossip on the sport's mega rich racing playboys. Thrill to the on-going saga of Canadian speed king Jacques Villeneuve and his engagement to Australian pop babe Danni Minogue. New titbits are added every week and make fascinating reading. After all, everyone loves a bit of gossip.

Flat tyre

To complement its live coverage, ITV publishes a paper magazine called F1. Unfortunately, the content of this magazine can't be read on the Web site and the link to the magazine section is merely a taster of what the latest issue includes, designed to snare you into buying a copy. A few lines of text is all you get – the online equivalent of a flat tyre, so to speak. For more weighty reads, reach out for the Pitt Pass section. This includes in-depth and often exclusive interviews with drivers, team owners and other larger-than-life F1 personalities.

In spectacular sports like motor racing, the best way to capture the spirit is through pictures. This is something the ITV site does with great aplomb. Instead of a few token snaps scattered randomly around the site, there's an entire gallery of action photography to choose from. The pictures are thoughtfully displayed in thumbnail size – which makes for turbo-boosted page loading times – with the option to view the full picture with a simple click. As the season unfolds so do the pictures, charting all the crucial crashes and wonderful wins.

Dedicated fans will love the range of statistics provided by this site. The only thing missing is some sound files of the legendary Murray Walker in action. As the great man himself might say: "look at this, look at this!" ◆◆◆◆◆

FORMULA ONE.COM

URL: www.formula1.com
In a nutshell: Another Grand Prix portal for your pleasure

A pit of alright

THIS is another Grand Prix portal, in the much the same style as ITV's Web site, but without the hallowed stamp of officialdom. But who cares? Most of the Web's best pages are unofficial and this one certainly looks nice on the outside, like a shiny new Mclaren, it's just a question of the quality of the engine.

Making much of the inclusion of live timing and results, this site offers all the latest news and views and has recently added a multimedia section where you can see a preview of the new Jaguar car and watch an interview with hot-headed Ulster playboy Eddie Irvine. There's even a guide to all the Grand Prix circuits (above). Not a bad site at all, but still falling short of ITV's take on the Formula One circus. ◆◆◆◆◆

THE AYRTON SENNA HOMEPAGE

URL: www.a-senna.com
In a nutshell: Tribute to the king of modern Grand Prix racing

Samba magic

ARYTON Senna is a name that will be immortal amongst Grand prix fans for many years to come. The Brazilian driver so tragically killed at Monza has become an icon of modern sport. He was the embodiment of everything that is motor racing. He was flamboyant, a daring risk taker and he was glamorous. He lived life on the edge and would never back away from confrontation.

So is this site an adequate vehicle for the man? Well in terms of design it's definitely a

Tyrell, functional but unlike to take the chequered flag. Where content is concerned though it's a purring Ferrari, with bells on. Plenty of archived articles and tons of images make this a must visit.

Senna fans can also chat about their late hero and read famous quotes from and made on him by various motorsport figures. In a surprisingly morbid twist, you can even watch the video of his death. Good stuff and quite comprehensively detailed. Fans will enjoy this well balanced site even if it is a little gruesome in places. ◆◆◆◆◆

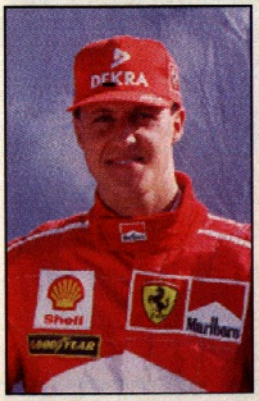
THE MICHAEL SCHUMACHER FANCLUB

URL: www.schumacher-fanclub.com
In a nutshell: Fan site for the world's leading driver

Schu beauty

LOVE him or loathe him, you have to admit that Michael Schumacher is a great Formula One driver. Okay, okay, so he's German and the sort of driver who doesn't think twice about resorting to Dick Dastardly style tactics to win a race. But when it comes to eating up tarmac, he's one greedy son of a gun.

The world championship may have slipped from his once vice-like grip in recent seasons but this tribute site is definitely a winner. There's all the usual stuff like biographies and fan club information but in terms of effort and enthusiasm, this leaves other fan sites eating dust. The news section is impeccably maintained, with informative updates posted every day.



Such is the Webmaster's dedication he's even managed to blag some exclusive family snaps of Schumacher training on the beach in Dubai. Deserves its place on the podium for sheer perseverance alone. ◆◆◆◆◆

FORMULA ONE LIVE

URL: www.f1-live.com
In a nutshell: Yet another portal site, but one with live testing info

Lapping it all up

AS you might expect of a Web site supported by Internet giants Yahoo!, this one has the lot. From breaking news reports on who's doing what in the Formula One world, to pictures of leather-clad models' bottoms for your desktop, it's everything a dedicated Formula One fan could want.

The latest innovation is live race timings. If for some reason you can't get to a TV, simply log on and track your favourite driver's progress online. The statistics are automatically updated every few seconds, with details of the drivers' speed there for your perusal.

What else? Well, there's an excellent photo gallery showing you what the stars have been up to both on and off the track. Like the news, this is updated with impressive regularity. And if you missed something, fret not. The archive section will have it covered. So good it overtakes the competition several times over. ◆◆◆◆◆

Best of the rest

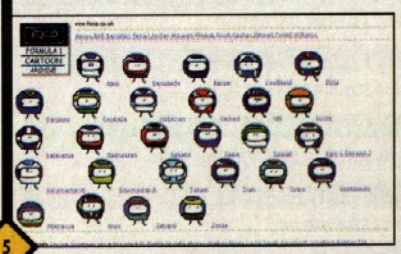
GET UP TO SPEED WITH OTHER ASPECTS OF FORMULA 1 AT THESE SITES

1 **Silverstone**
www.silverstone-circuit
Forget Brands Hatch, Silverstone is top dog for the British Grand Prix and this is the circuit's official site, where you can book tickets online

2 **Grand Prix History**
www.ddavid.com/formula1
Who was the greatest driver? Perhaps the incomparable Fangio, or maybe Jim Clarke. Find out about the past masters here

3 **Formula 1 Rumours**
www.f1rumours.net
Gossip, gossip, gossip. And more gossip. Yep, that's what makes the world of Formula 1 rotate and the race is on to find the juiciest story first

4 **McLaren Racing**
www.mclaren.co.uk
Last year's Driver's Championship winning car has its own site. Find out all the latest news at this classy and interactive site.



5 **F1 Cartoon Archive**
www.foca.co.uk/tears.htm
Instead of bombarding you with technical specifications the site prefers to stick to the aesthetics as you will see

SPONSORED BY DATA BECKER
CONTACT SALES ON 01420 22707
DATA BECKER
WWW.DATABECKER.CO.UK

Essential clicks

SOME OF THE BEST SITES WHICH YOU WILL RETURN TO AGAIN AND AGAIN

NEWS

CNN
www.cnn.com

BBC NEWS
www.bbc.co.uk

ELECTRONIC TELEGRAPH
www.telegraph.co.uk

THE GUARDIAN ONLINE
www.guardian.co.uk

HOTWIRED
www.hotwired.com

THE INDEPENDENT
www.independent.co.uk

ITN
www.itn.co.uk

MET OFFICE
www.met-office.gov.uk

MSNBC
www.msnbc.com

NANDO TIMES
www.nando.net

PA NEWS
www.pa.press.net

SUNDAY TIMES
www.sunday-times.co.uk

THE TIMES
www.the-times.co.uk

OUT AND ABOUT

ALTON TOWERS
www.alton-towers.co.uk/

BRISTOL ZOO
www.bristolzoo.org.uk/

BRITISH MUSEUM
www.british-museum.ac.uk

LEGOLAND WINDSOR
www.legoland.co.uk/

MUSEUM OF LONDON
www.museum-london.org.uk

THE NATIONAL GALLERY
www.nationalgallery.org.uk

NAT. MARITIME MUSEUM
www.nmm.ac.uk

NAT. RAILWAY MUSEUM
www.nmsi.ac.uk/nrm

ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS
www.royalacademy.org.uk

THE SCIENCE MUSEUM
www.nmsi.ac.uk/welcome.html

THE TATE GALLERY
www.tate.org.uk

THORPE PARK
www.thorpepark.co.uk/

VICTORIA AND ALBERT
www.vam.ac.uk

FACTUAL ART

GREAT BRITAIN HISTORY

URL: www.great-britain.co.uk/history
In a nutshell: Everything you ever wanted to know about the British Isles at a glance

2000 and all that

WHAT does history mean to you? Is it about loads of dull events that happened years ago and no longer mean anything? Or maybe you regard it as living, something which changes every day and shapes the way we live our lives and organise our society. As far as we're concerned, history is about running around dressed in bearskins and hitting marauders with large axes, it's about repelling invaders with boiling oil and duffing up the French every 20 years. Yes, we think history's great and there's enough of it clogging up the nooks and crannies of the Web to keep you going for ages.

One of the joys of the Net is that there is so much in the way of 'untold' history online. By this we mean alternative takes on cultures and societies, history they didn't teach you in school. How many of us know anything about Africa, Islam, South America or China? Few of us. So the Web's a good place to brush up on your facts and put modern events like the Balkan war into the right perspective and context. First up we're going to stick closer to home though and take a look at the history of our fair Isle.

History yesterday

This isn't a really comprehensive or intellectual site by any means. However, what it does do is put the last two thousand years of British history into neat, at-a-glance sections. Starting off at the beginning (where else) with stone age man and the building of the West Country's most famous monument, Stonehenge, we are taken on a journey through Roman, Viking and Saxon incursions to the present day and the coming of Thatcher and Blair.

Images are always going to be problematic for the early years, but there are pictures of kings and queens and the Bayeux tapestry to keep you occupied and the no-nonsense, concise content keeps everything simple. Professional historians and archaeologists will no doubt pick holes in the content here, but for laymen like ourselves it's just fine.

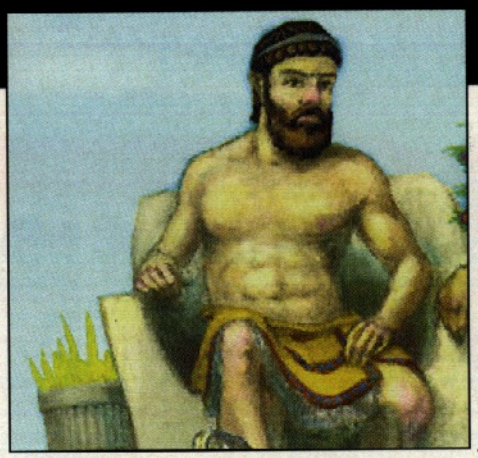
Not a design that'll go down in Web history, but the perfect site to dip into and find out more about our heritage. ◆◆◆◆◆

MYTH WEB

URL: www.mythweb.com
In a nutshell: Online guide to Greek mythology

Internet Greeks

REMEMBER the really interesting bits of history you learned at school? That's right the bits where bronzed Greek super heroes performed outrageous feats of strength and heroism, before giving it all up for a girl only to be subsequently punished by a jealous and amorously scorned God. This site is dedicated to all these great events and has been lovingly illustrated to make a great resource for children. We like the Greek Gods section where you can click on a God to reveal more information via a personal profile. We're sure Zeus is a tacky nightclub though... Not strictly history, but jolly entertaining all the same. ◆◆◆◆◆



ASSASSINATION CONSPIRACIES

URL: www.parascope.com/mx/matrix01.htm
In a nutshell: Guide to the shootings that baffled the Yanks

MLK and JFK

THERE'S nothing goes together quite as well as the average American and a nice, juicy conspiracy theory.

The history of the late Twentieth Century was littered with them and none have caught the popular imagination quite as much as the deaths of Martin Luther King and JFK. This site explores the theories behind events in a logical and reasoned fashion. Rather than offering outlandish hypotheses about aliens, mole men and the FBI, Parascope poses questions based on the events that don't quite tally up. This is a good site which offers visitors plenty to chew on. Not only does it appear well researched, there's an authoritive air throughout. A quick browse will beat those boring documentary blues. ◆◆◆◆◆

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

URL: www.thehistorychannel.co.uk
In a nutshell: Satellite channel's site dedicated to aiding historical learning

Time travellers

LET us start by saying that this is an excellent site in terms of presentation and content. You may have watched the History Channel on either cable or satellite and been bored to tears by austere documentaries on tired topics, but the Web site is a different proposition and far more amenable for educational purposes. For a start, there's a UK-specific portal. The classroom section is excellent with A-Level standard articles on all the major historical figures (Napoleon, Stalin, Henry VIII etc) and a superb interface to guide you around the topics. There's much more to explore as well, so pay it a visit. ◆◆◆◆◆

ATOM ARCHIVE

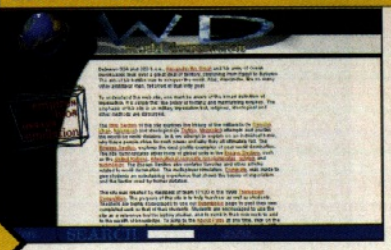
URL: www.atomarchive.com
In a nutshell: Chilling site chronicling the history of the atomic bomb

Atom bomb

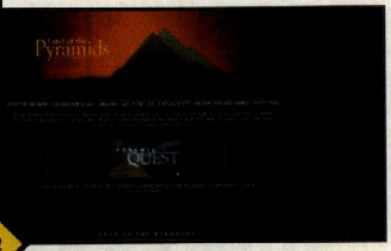
MANY of us are far too young to recall the very real and disturbing threat of nuclear war harboured by so many in the Fifties and Sixties, so this site will be able to put events into perspective. There's a comprehensive and chilling selection of images from pictures of Enola Gay being loaded with her deadly arsenal and the mushroom cloud at Nagasaki (pictured). Coupled with the informative content this site is a winner and serves as a scary reminder of why we're wrong to love the bomb. ◆◆◆◆◆

Best of the rest

SOME MORE SITES THAT MAY OR MAY NOT GO DOWN IN HISTORY



1 **World Domination**
http://library.thinkquest.org/17120
What do Napoleon Bonaparte, Adolf Hitler, and Benito Mussolini all have in common apart from probably being bullied at school? Find out here



2 **Land of the Pyramids**
www.discovery.com/search/guide/ancientworlds/egypt/egypt.html
The pyramids could have been built by aliens or the Grateful Dead. This site offers believable theories

3 **Hadrian's Wall**
www.hadrians-wall.org
Canny blokes those Romans. Not only did they give us the city, proper roads and baths, but they also built a huge wall to keep the Jocks out of England

4 **Bible History**
www.bible-history.com
Modern history effectively began with the birth of Christ, despite what the politically correct trendies might say about changing AD to the Common Era

5 **The Royal Family**
www.royal.gov.uk/history
They're German, have more rights than the rest of us and could decide how to run the country if they wanted. They also have a top Web site

SPONSORED BY DATA BECKER
CONTACT SALES ON 01420 22707
DATA BECKER
WWW.DATABECKER.CO.UK

Practical Internet

THE UK'S FASTEST GROWING INTERNET MAGAZINE

GETTING ONLINE CHEAPER, FASTER AND EASIER

SOLVE ALL YOUR NET PROBLEMS WITH ONE SIMPLE PHONE CALL

- The new Practical Internet helpline offers you expert advice, when you need it most and for a fraction of what you'd expect it to cost.

- Practical Internet has launched an expert helpline service which you can call for instant solutions on any of your Internet hardware and software problems. Whatever the problem, no matter how large or small, our team of dedicated experts will be on hand to offer you instant help, where you need it most, at home.

•No Call Waiting
You only pay for the technical help you receive – there is no queuing system. So in the unlikely event of the helpline being busy when you call up, you don't get connected and you don't even pay.

•Free Call Back
If engaged, you can always use the helpline's answer service to receive a free call back at a later time.

•Limited Call Duration
If your problem is complicated and is going to take a long time to solve, you can leave it with our engineers and you can call us later for the solution.

•Complete Money Back Guarantee
If you are not completely satisfied with the solution given to you by our engineers, fax us your complaint (fax: 01753 755930) and we will give you your money back.

For complete solutions to all your Internet software and hardware problems call us now on

0906 466 44 87

Our team of experts are waiting to help you.

0906 466 44 87

HELPLINE OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK 7AM – 11PM

Please note that the Practical Internet helpline is not able to deal with faulty cover CD enquiries.

Your call to the Practical Internet Helpline is charged at £1.50 per minute (premium rate). Each call you make will show up on your standard telephone bill.

SOFTSPOT

REVIEW: EMAIL CLIENTS: PAGE 82
TUTORIAL: DIGIGUIDE: PAGE 84
TUTORIAL: PURESIGHT: PAGE 86
TUTORIAL: FIREWORKS 3: PAGE 88
TUTORIAL: CANVAS 7: PAGE 90

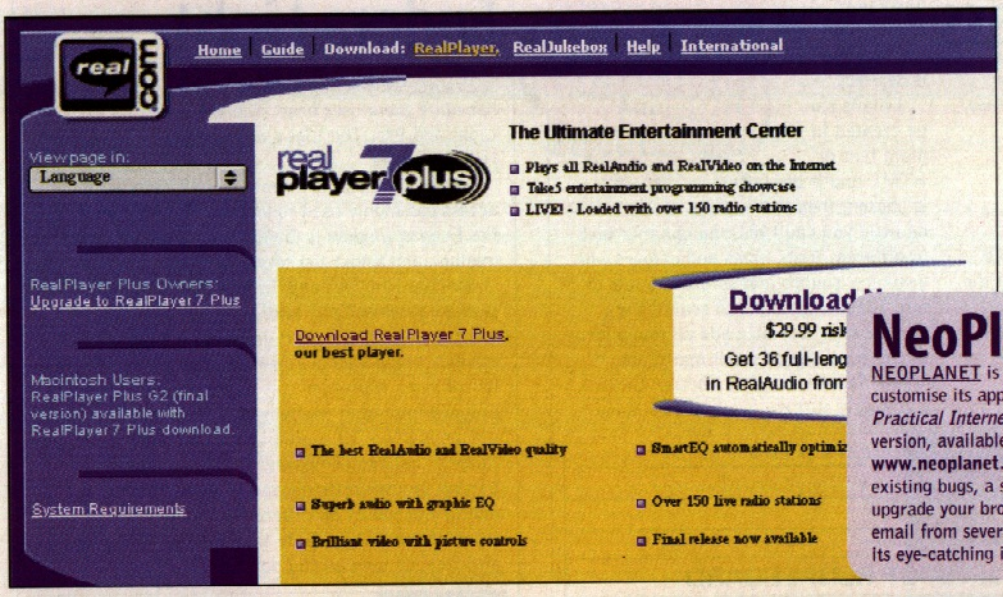
THIS ISSUE WE BRING YOU REVIEWS OF EMAIL CLIENTS, GREAT TUTORIALS AND SOFTWARE NEWS

NOW THAT'S **REAL CLEVER**

IDEALLY we'd all like to watch and listen to more live Webcasts on the Internet, but we keep running into that bandwidth brick wall. Fortunately, Real.Com (formerly RealNetworks) is well aware of the current limitations of live video streaming and with the release of RealPlayer 7 Plus, the company aims to improve the current broadcasting experience for Internet users.

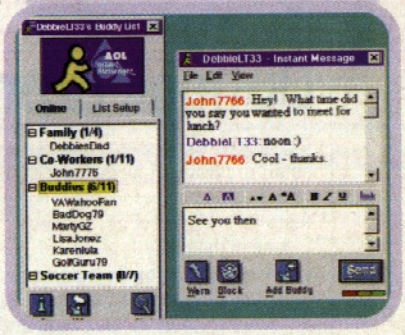
Being branded as the 'ultimate entertainment centre' this program will give you CD-quality audio with a decent modem (28.8kbps and above), more than 150 live radio stations and MP3 support. When it comes to playing video, RealPlayer 7 Plus provides the best image quality that has ever been seen and features a range of picture controls. Those lucky enough to enjoy a high bandwidth connection will receive the luxury of full screen video display.

You can download the full program from **www.real.com** which will set you back £20. But it will certainly improve the quality of that live S Club 7 Webcast.



AIM high

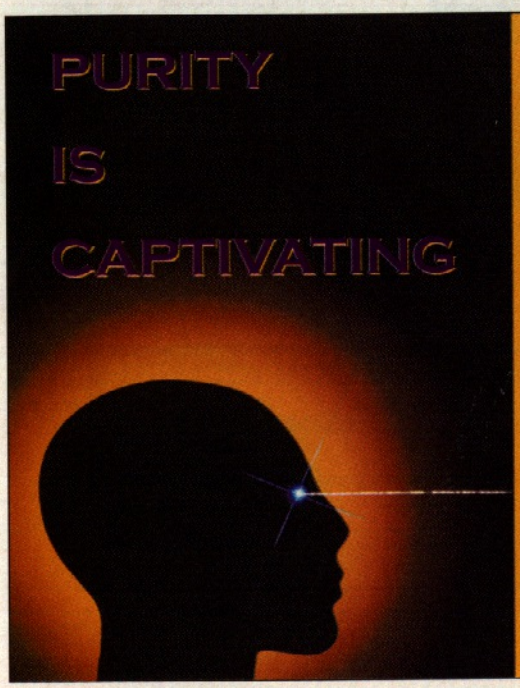
AOL Instant Messenger is one of the Net's most popular downloads, so any new version is always eagerly anticipated. Although not radically different from its predecessor, it comes with the option to add images to your messages and also introduces AIM Talk, a feature which allows people to talk directly to their 'buddies' using a headset and microphone. AOL Instant Messenger is available for free on the cover CD.



NeoPlanet revamped

NEOPLANET is the increasingly popular browser that lets users customise its appearance using skins (see the feature in *Practical Internet* 38 for more information). The new 5.01 version, available on the cover CD and from **www.neoplanet.com**, incorporates a number of fixes to existing bugs, a smart download function that enables you to upgrade your browser while you surf, and the ability to import email from several applications. Worth checking out if only for its eye-catching interface.

PURITY IS CAPTIVATING

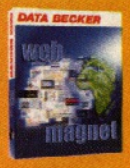


PURITY: n. pureness, cleanness, freedom from physical or moral pollution. [ME, f. OF *pureté*, assim. to LL *puritas*-tatis f. L *purus* pure].

Deletes every internet session, checks for changes on your favourite websites, blocks unwanted banners, and protects from unwanted emails.

CAPTIVE a. & n. Fraken prisoner, kept in confinement, under restraint, unable to escape so~ATIONn. [LL *captivare* take captive]

For the capturing, searching, finding and down-loading of images, videos and sound files.



DATA BECKER

www.databecker.co.uk

Reviewed: Free email clients

If your email program can't cope with your mail, or you're sick of its interface, try some alternatives. **ROLAND WADDILOVE** looks at five fabulous freebies

MOST people use the email program that came free with their PC or Internet service provider. There are, however, many alternative programs out there which you can install from our CD and configure in under a minute.

Some programs are free, but others you have to pay for. On test here are five freebies that offer a range of useful features. For instance, if you are using Outlook Express for business email, you might like to take a look at FoxMail and Pegasus. These two programs enable you to broadcast messages to many people held in a list. This is an essential facility that can be used for sales promotions and other information you need to distribute to many people in or outside of your business. On the other hand, if you just use email for family and friends then Outlook Express is clearly the most fun.

TOPTIP

All these email programs let you read and write email offline, thus saving on your phone bills

ON THE CD Practical Internet

Outlook Express

OUTLOOK Express is a cracker of an email program. It looks modern, is easy to use, offers a reasonable range of features and best of all, is free.

Under the menu is a toolbar with icons and labels for the common functions. The rest of the screen is divided into three or four windows. At the top-left is a folder list containing the Inbox, Outbox, Sent and deleted items. You can create more folders and emails can be dragged and dropped into the appropriate folders.

Below this is a Contacts list, which is a quick way of accessing the people in the address book. Double-clicking an entry starts a new email addressed to that person.

Rules can be created and these are constructed from 12 conditions and 12 actions, for instance, if an email arrives with a specific word in the subject it can be moved to a particular folder. Email from particular senders can also be blocked if desired.

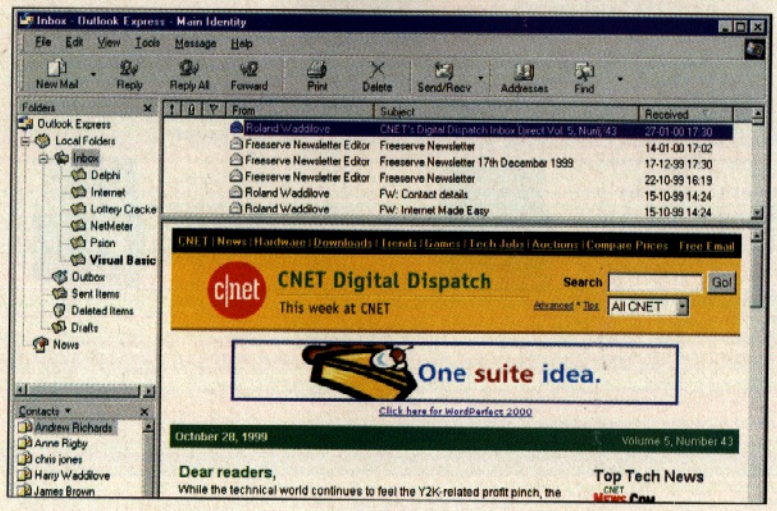
Emails can be created in plain text or HTML and if the latter is chosen, then there seems to be little you can't do. You can mix text in different fonts, sizes and colours with graphics, sounds and so on. It's lots of fun. It's also possible to search the address book and then add all found items to the To: field for small mailshots. While Pegasus does this better, Outlook Express is still the best emailer here.

SEAL OF APPROVAL Practical Internet

Product:	Outlook Express
Web:	www.microsoft.com/uk
Email:	N/A
Price:	Free

SOFTSPOT SCOREBOARD

Features:	90%	Not the most, but the best
Ease of use:	95%	Good for novices
Value:	95%	It's free. What more do you want?
Overall:	95%	Great for making fun emails



Eudora Light

EUDORA has been around for a long time and it has quite a big user base. There are two versions: Light and Pro. The Light version is the one we're reviewing here.

Under the menu is a toolbar with buttons to access commonly used functions. The main part of the Eudora window is divided in two, with a mailbox and folder list on the left.

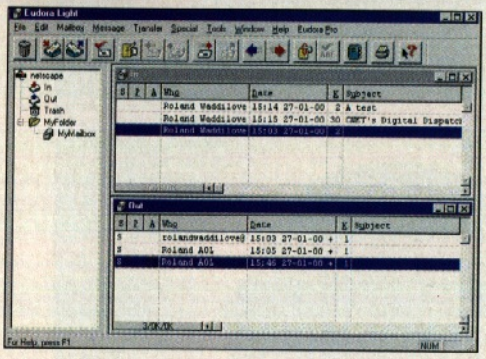
Standard In, Out and Trash mailboxes are created automatically and you can add more, storing them in folders if you like. Double-click a mailbox and a window opens on the right to show its contents. Messages can be manually dragged and dropped into other mailboxes.

This is a 'no frills' email program, with a limited range of options compared to Outlook Express. Setting up isn't difficult and it is possible to create multiple accounts on different services with separate mailboxes. Note that Eudora Pro is now also free, so long as you don't mind ad banners.

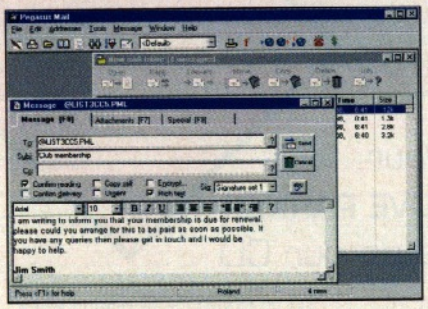
Product:	Eudora Light
Web:	www.eudora.com
Email:	eudora-custserv@qualcomm.com
Price:	Free

SOFTSPOT SCOREBOARD

Features:	50%	Limited range of features
Ease of use:	90%	A bit old fashioned
Value:	80%	It's free, but so are the others
Overall:	73%	Not bad, but a bit uninspiring



Pegasus Mail



Pegasus makes short work of email distribution lists. You can also juggle single or multiple users

PEGASUS Mail is another popular email program and it's easy to see why. During the installation you are offered the choice of setting up the program for single or multiple users. If you choose the multiple option then named accounts can be set up and whether the person has full or limited ability to change system settings. This is handy.

By default, you only see the inbox folder, but other folders can be created to store emails. You can drag-and-drop emails from the inbox to one of these other folders or you can set up rules to automatically move, copy or delete incoming mail. There is a good range of options for defining rules.

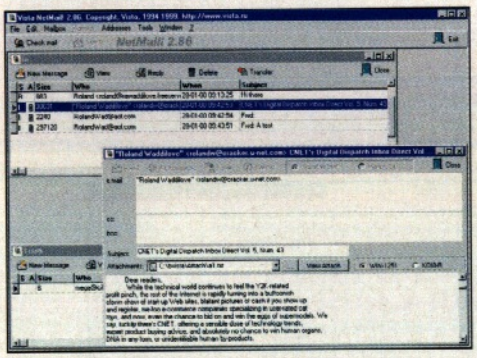
One advanced feature is the ability to create and use email distribution lists. This easily lets you send messages to a group of people. Pegasus Mail has an excellent range of features and is well worth considering.

Product:	Pegasus Mail
Web:	www.pegasus.usa.com
Email:	support@pmail.gen.nz
Price:	Free

SOFTSPOT SCOREBOARD

Features:	90%	Good range of features
Ease of use:	90%	Simple to set up
Value:	90%	Free, but check out the others
Overall:	90%	Good for business use

NetMail! 2.86



THIS free program is offered as an alternative to Outlook Express. Although installation went without mishap and configuring was easy, the program (version 2.86 no less) feels like work in progress. Parts of it are badly designed and look ugly, the program doesn't work as you might expect and some controls are poorly placed.

NetMail! won't automatically dial up your ISP so you have to dial using your normal Internet dialer. Then when you are online you can retrieve and mail on the system. It isn't a problem, but it is not quite as friendly as the other programs, which can connect to your ISP, retrieve your mail and then hang up the phone afterwards.

Emails must be plain text and there are no options to embellish them with fancy fonts, styles, graphics or sounds. This is fine for most business use, but for home you would probably want something a bit more exciting. For some strange reason a large part of the screen is occupied by the email header, leaving little room for the message. It's unnecessary and ugly.

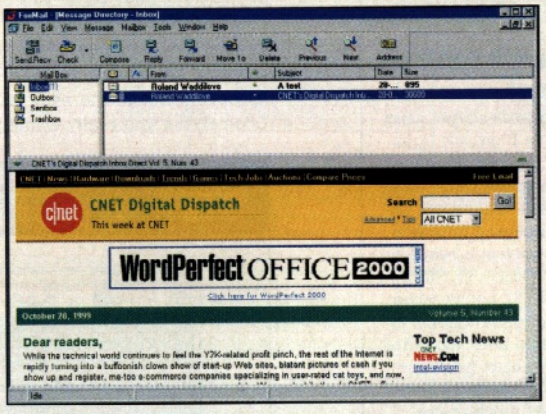
Graphics, sound and other files can be sent and received as attachments. Text is stripped from HTML format email and to see the message you would need to save the message and load it into a browser.

Product:	NetMail 2.86
Web:	www.vista.ru
Email:	vista@aha.ru
Price:	Free

SOFTSPOT SCOREBOARD

Features:	50%	Not as feature-rich as some
Ease of use:	40%	Irritating and ugly user interface
Value:	45%	Not recommended, even for free!
Overall:	45%	Best avoided.

FoxMail



IF we were talking about cars, Outlook Express would be a Lexus, NetMail! would be a Lada and FoxMail would be a Volkswagon – well built, reliable, packed with features and good value. FoxMail looks a lot like Outlook Express in its main views, but has dialog boxes that resemble Eudora and list processing features borrowed from Pegasus.

Foxy emails

FoxMail neatly imported Eudora's address book and it can do the same trick with Netscape, too. This helps the transition from your old email program if you have either of these. As well as holding names and email addresses, the address book can also store lists. Placing the list name in the To: field of an email will broadcast it to everyone on that list.

You can't create fancy emails, but you can receive them. Like Outlook Express, the main screen is divided into three areas: Mailbox/folder list at the top-left, email list at the top-right and preview pane at the bottom. HTML formatted emails are rendered perfectly in the preview pane, so long as you have Internet Explorer installed on your PC. When it comes to creating emails, though, there are no facilities for changing the font, style, size, adding graphics or sounds. This is a bit of a disappointment as the rest of the program is excellent.

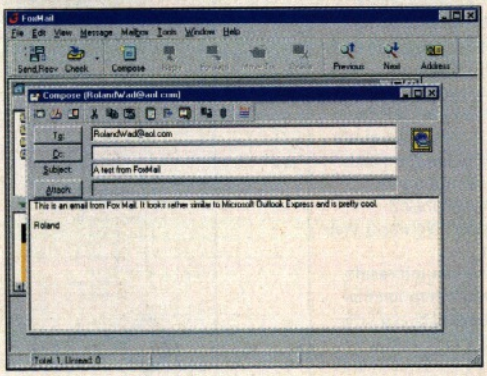
You can create folders and manually click and drag emails from the inbox to them and it is possible to create simple rules to sort messages automatically. The actions are limited to transferring an email to another folder and more flexibility is required here. Setting up FoxMail is straightforward and a lot like Eudora. Multiple accounts are handled in a Eudora manner, too.

Foxmail is a great program that comes a close second to Outlook Express. Try it, you'll like it.

Product:	FoxMail
Web:	http://aerofox.com/fox/
Email:	gzdragon@public1.guangzhou.gd.cn
Price:	Free

SOFTSPOT SCOREBOARD

Features:	90%	Runner up to Outlook Express
Ease of use:	60%	A very nice user interface
Value:	75%	Superb value
Overall:	90%	An alternative to Outlook Express



Creating an email in FoxMail. The format is plain and simple, but easy to use

Beginner: DigiGuide

OBJECTIVE
To set up and use DigiGuide to download TV programme listings and then view them on-screen.

With the multitude of TV channels competing for your attention, it's tricky figuring out what's on when. **CLIVE PARKER** shows how to use DigiGuide, a handy viewing guide on our CD

YOU know what it's like. You're hard at work on your PC finishing off that last vital image to go up on your Web site, when you glance at the clock and realise you've missed this week's episode of The League of Gentlemen. Okay, so it's repeated on Sundays (and ad nauseam through the week on BBC Choice), but you really wanted to watch it tonight. If only your PC could remind you it was on.

Well now it can with DigiGuide. DigiGuide is a downloadable TV guide that you can use to find out what's showing on practically every channel available in the UK on Sky Digital, OnDigital, cable and sad old terrestrial TV. But you don't just get the listings – you can set up DigiGuide to remind you with either an on-screen alert or a digitised voice alert that your program is just about to start.

It's easy to download, set up and install onto your PC. Best of all, it only takes a couple of minutes to update every week, so you need never miss your favourite TV shows again.

Huh?!

THOSE TERMS EXPLAINED

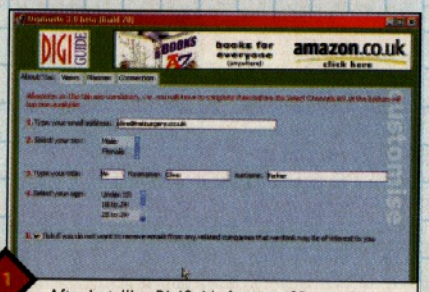
Speech control panel

The Speech control panel used by DigiGuide is, in fact, a Microsoft add-on for Windows called SAPI (Speech Application Programming Interface). This function is available for Windows 95, 98, NT and 2000, but be aware that it is not installed as standard when you install the Windows (whatever version) operating system on a PC. Instead, the control panel has to be downloaded from the Microsoft Web site. Once the panel is installed, though, the Speech control panel enables your PC to convert text into speech so any of your documents can be read out loud to you. It also enables speech recognition, so you can set up your PC to obey voice commands and convert speech to text in a word processor.

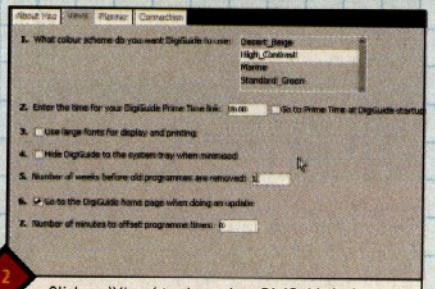
Text to speech engine

The Speech control panel doesn't just work by itself, it needs some extra software to do its magical job. This software is called a speech engine and it is needed to recognise spoken words or to convert text to digitised speech. The speech engines and the Speech control panel are available for download from the Microsoft MSDN (Microsoft Developers Network) Web site at **http://msdn.microsoft.com/workshop/imedia/agent/agentdl.asp**. The speech engine that's required for DigiGuide is called the Lernout & Hauspie, TruVoice Text-To-Speech Engine.

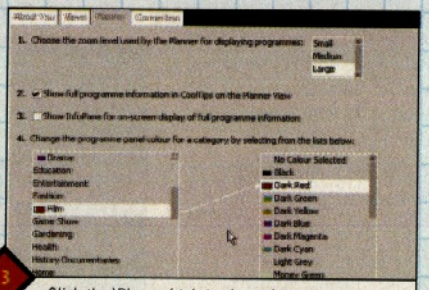
STEP 1: SETTING UP DIGIGUIDE



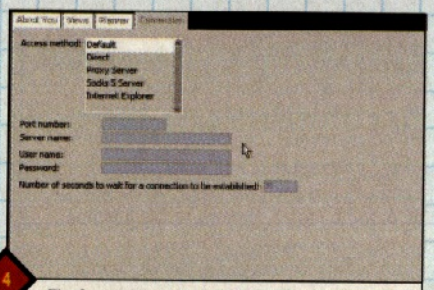
1 After installing DigiGuide from our CD, run the program and the set up page opens. Enter your details. You must fill in this page, otherwise you will not be able to use DigiGuide at all.



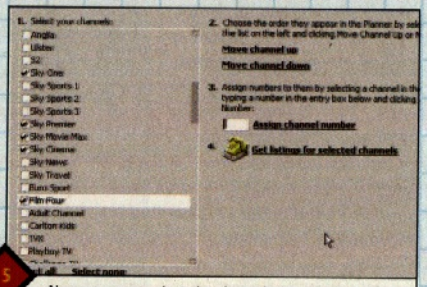
2 Click on 'Views' to choose how DigiGuide looks. Select a colour scheme and enter details as requested. Enter the time you want as 'prime time' and how long to keep programmes on the database.



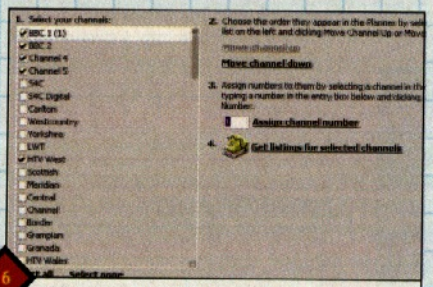
3 Click the 'Planner' tab to choose how programmes are displayed. You can select whether programme details are displayed as tool tips or in an info pane and select colours for different types of programmes.



4 The Connection tab lets you choose how to connect to the Net to download programme details. Select the Default setting. Now click on the 'Select Channels' link.



5 Now you must select the channels you want to use in your DigiGuide. If you only have terrestrial TV, then you just have to choose BBC1, 2, ITV (your region), C4 and C5.

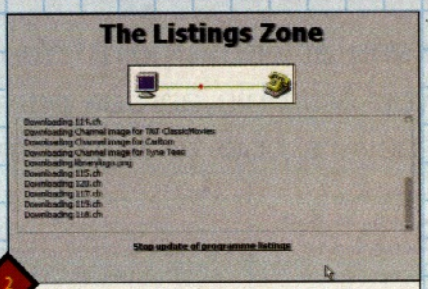


6 After you've selected the channels, you can use the Move Channel Up and Move Channel Down links to change the order in which they appear. Click on the 'Return to Previous View' link.

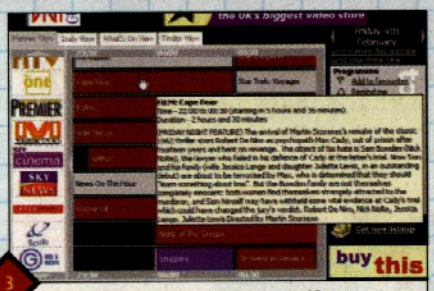
ON THE CD Internet

STEP 2: DOWNLOAD AND BROWSE

1 Now it's time to get online and download the listings. At the main screen, the display is empty because no listings are stored on your PC. Go to the 'Get New Listings' link and click on it.

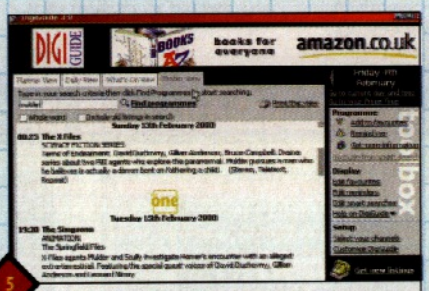


2 DigiGuide should launch your dial-up connection, connect to the DigiGuide site and start downloading the listings. You can see exactly which channel listings are being downloaded.

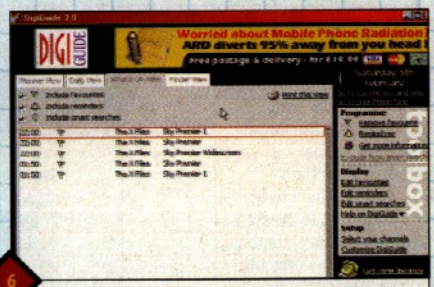


3 After the download ends, click on the 'Return to previous screen' link. The Planner View should now be filled with programme listings. By scrolling, you can see what's on and when.

4 Click on the 'TV channel' icon in the left column you to see a scrollable list of what's on in the Daily View window. Change the date at the top, to scroll through a channel for the next few weeks.



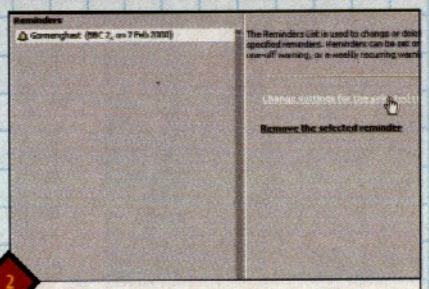
5 Click on 'Finder View' to open a mini search engine. Type a word and click on 'Find Programmes'. A search for 'mulder' found The X-Files on BBC1 and the X-Files episode of The Simpsons on Sky One.



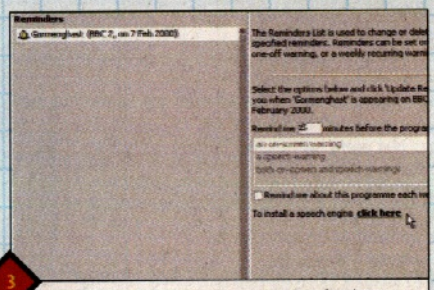
6 By clicking on 'Edit Favourites', you can choose your favourite programmes from the list. Then click on the 'What's On View' tab, to see if any of your favourites are being broadcast on any specific day.

STEP 3: IT TALKS!

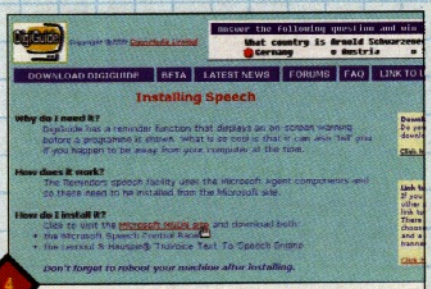
1 You can set up DigiGuide to remind you when programmes are due to be aired. Right-click on a programme you want to watch and then click on the 'Remind Me' command.



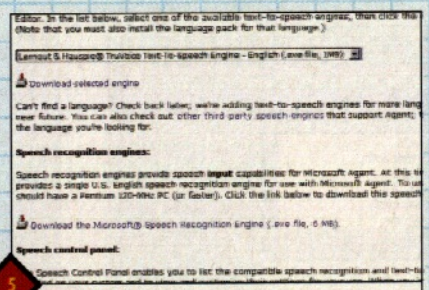
2 To set up the reminder functions of DigiGuide, go to the Edit Reminders link in the right column and click it to open the Reminder preferences. When it opens, select a programme and click on 'Change settings'.



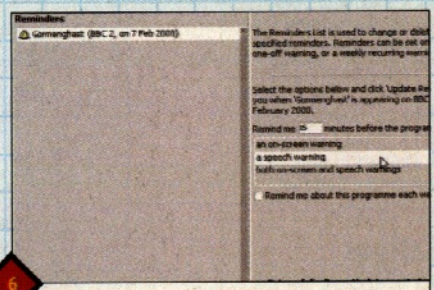
3 On the settings page you can set a time for the reminder to be displayed on-screen. If you have a speech engine, you can specify a spoken warning. If you don't, click on the 'Click Here' link.



4 The link opens your Web browser and connects you to the DigiGuide site where the speech functions are explained. To install the speech feature, click on the link that takes you to the Microsoft MSDN Site.



5 At the site, scroll to the entry for Text to Speech engines. In the pop-up menu, select the 'Lernout & Hauspie® TruVoice Text-To-Speech Engine' and download it. Then download the Speech control panel.



6 Install both programs and restart your PC. Run DigiGuide and go to the Edit Reminders page. Now the speech reminder function is enabled and you can select it.

Intermediate: Pure Sight

OBJECTIVE

To set up PureSight to guard against accessing pornographic sites

It must have happened to you at some point. You are browsing the Web when you stumble across pornographic content. **CLIVE PARKER** discovers how to remain pure!

IT'S a sad fact that there are pornographic sites on the Internet. They're not as all-pervading as some tabloid newspapers or magazines would have you believe, but they do exist. Pornography, of course, exists in other media such as books, magazines, video and DVD. The difference with the Internet is that you – or your children – can stumble across hard-core images. Luckily there's software designed to detect X-rated Web pages. But this system depends on the creators of an adult Web site getting it rated. You could set up blocking software to block all unrated pages, but that would block most of the rest of the Internet, too. With PureSight you can specify exactly which pages and Web sites you want to block. You can use the rating system to block adult pages, but you can also add URLs and IP addresses to special 'block lists' within the program. So if you find an unrated adult site by mistake, you can add it to the list of blocked sites. The program is free on our cover CD.

Huh?!

THOSE TERMS EXPLAINED

RSAC

The Recreational Software Advisory Council is an independent non-profit organisation set up in 1994 by a group of six major US trade organisations, the largest of which was the Software Publishers Association. The aim of the RSAC was to create a new and objective content labelling ratings system for recreational games software and for the Internet. The RSACi ratings system is one of the two major Internet ratings systems that is currently in operation.

SafeSurf

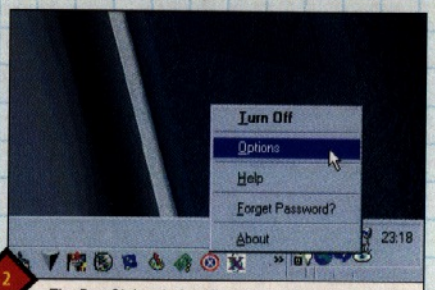
The SafeSurf Rating Standard is a voluntary rating system set up in the US and designed to protect children, as well as the first amendment rights of their parents. It was developed with input from thousands of parents and Net users, worldwide. Its structure is different from other rating systems in several ways. It is more detailed, its goal is to objectively describe both content and how that content is presented and it is the first system designed to allow those who self-rate and those who evaluate to have enough flexibility to reach agreement on a rating without compromising SafeSurf's purpose. Both Netscape Communicator and Internet Explorer can be updated to recognise and use the SafeSurf rating system.

Ratings

A number of ratings are applied to material on the Net, according to its suitability for different age groups. You can see a full list at **www.safesurf.com/ssplan.htm**

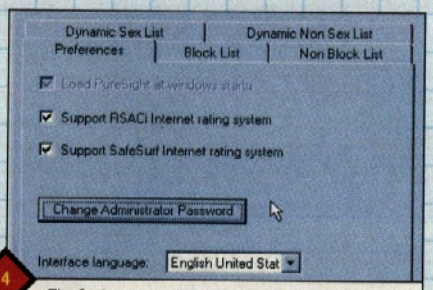
STEP 1: SETTING UP THE BASICS

1 When you run the installation program, you must enter a secret password into the program during the installation. This password lets you access PureSight. Reboot and click on the 'Try' button.

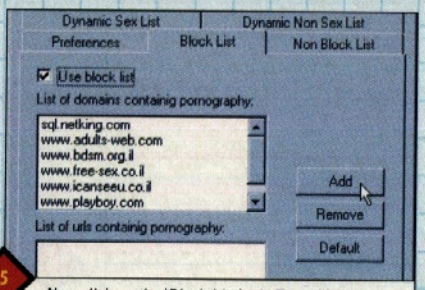


2 The PureSight window disappears. If you look in the system tray at the bottom-right of the screen, you will see a small icon like a green eye. Right-click on it and select the 'Options' command.

3 After clicking on the Options command, the Administrator password window appears. Type in the password you entered earlier and then click on the 'OK' button to continue.



4 The Options control panel now opens. Click on the 'Preferences' tab. From this page you can switch support for RSACi and the SafeSurf Internet rating systems on and off.

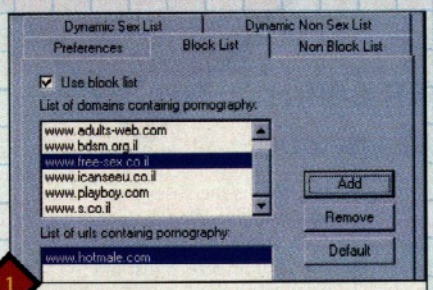


5 Now click on the 'Block List' tab. To enable the Block List, select the 'Use Block List' option. You can see a list of URLs that carry adult content. To add a site to this list, click on 'Add'.

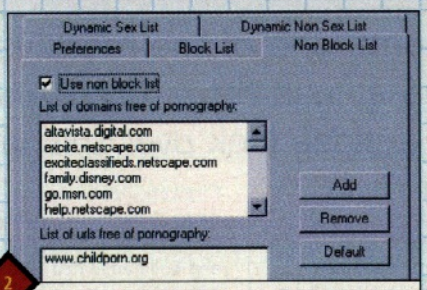
6 A dialog box opens where you can add a URL or the IP address of a Web server. Select what kind of entry you are making and type the address in the Address: window. Click on the 'Add' button to save the address.

ON THE CD Internet

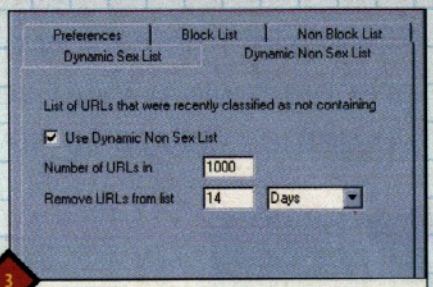
STEP 2: MORE SET UP OPTIONS



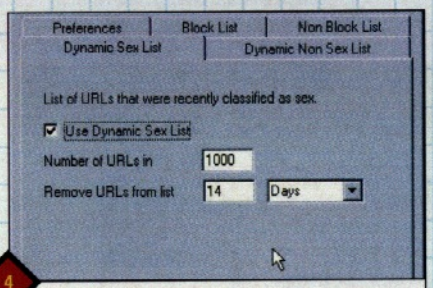
1 Add as many addresses as you like, then click on 'OK' to return to the Block List page. The URL or IP addresses appear in the bottom window of this page. To remove an entry, select it, then click on 'Remove'.



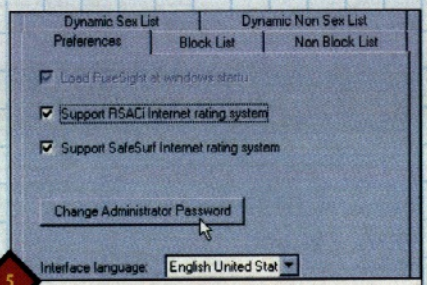
2 Click on the 'Non Block List' tab. This next page lists sites you do not wish to block. It works in exactly the same way as the Block List page, use the Add and remove buttons to modify the list.



3 PureSight can also list URLs that don't contain any unsuitable adult material. Click on the 'Dynamic Non Sex List' tab to go to the options. Here you can define various settings.



4 Exactly the same set of options appears on the Dynamic Sex List tab. Change the information on this page to determine how long URLs remain. Click on the 'Preferences' tab when you've finished.



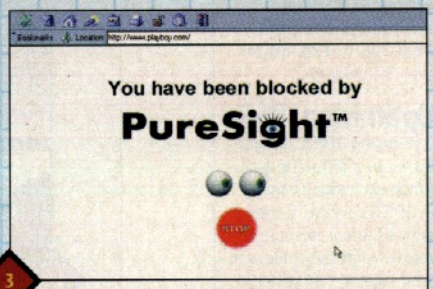
5 If, for any reason, you want to change the PureSight password, all you have to do is click on the 'Change Administrator Password' button on the main Preferences page.

6 Type the new password in the Administrator's Password box. You the have to type it again in the Confirm Password box. Click 'OK' to exit after changing the password.

STEP 3: BLOCKING IN ACTION

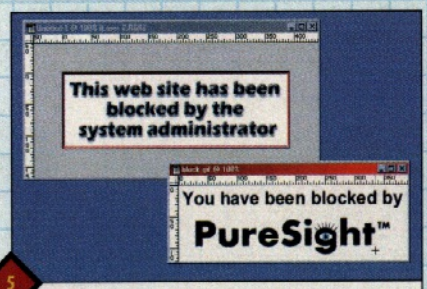
1 If you should want to turn off PureSight for any reason, go to the PureSight icon in the system tray and right-click on it. Now select the 'Turn Off' command in the pop-up menu.

2 Once again a dialog box appears prompting you to enter the administrator's password. Type it in the box and click 'OK' to switch off PureSight protection or click on the 'Cancel' box to keep it running.



3 Now it's time to try out PureSight. Open your browser and connect to the Internet as usual. To test PureSight, type in a URL that you know is in the list. In this case, we've entered **www.playboy.com**.

4 To customise the blocking message in PureSight, use Windows Explorer to find the folder. The GIF files should be in C:\Program Files\GenILTD\PureSight\data and they are called BLOCK.GIF and STOP.GIF.



5 Using your usual graphics program you can create your customised messages. Remember that the image files must have the same name as the original GIF images or PureSight will not display them.

6 After modifying the images, run your Web browser and try connecting to **www.playboy.com** again. The program blocks you as before, but now your own customised message is displayed in the Web browser.

Intermediate: Fireworks 3

OBJECTIVE
To use Fireworks 3 to create Web content with the minimum of fuss.

Fireworks has rapidly become one of the most useful graphic tools a Web designer can have. **CLIVE PARKER** sends up some rockets to have a close look over this latest version.

IT doesn't seem that old, but Macromedia's Fireworks graphics application is already up to version 3. As usual, Macromedia has improved functionality throughout the program. And because it ties in with Dreamweaver 3, you can be sure that any HTML or JavaScript created by Fireworks will work perfectly on your Web pages.

Fireworks takes the hassle out of many Web-related graphics problems. You can quickly design and build animated GIF images with total control over the size of each frame, the time the frame is displayed and the number of colours used in the image palette.

Even in these days of 56k modems, the biggest problem with the Web is the sheer size of the images some Web designers use on their pages. An image getting on for 100k in size is just not acceptable – using Fireworks you can optimise images so they have smaller file sizes. You can get a trial version of Fireworks 3 from Macromedia's Web site at **www.macromedia.com**

Huh?!

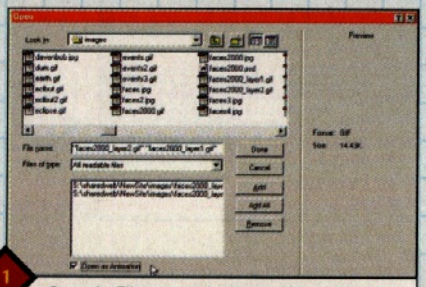
THOSE TERMS EXPLAINED

GIF
A popular graphics file format that was originally created by Compuserve and has been widely adopted across the Net. It saves fewer colours than other file formats (and is therefore ideal for animations and line art graphics), but creates smaller file sizes and therefore enables Web pages to load faster.

Optimising GIFs
When you optimise an image for the Web, you are reducing its file size so it doesn't take so long to download and display on-screen. With GIF images, this is usually done by reducing the colour palette. You'd be surprised at just how good some GIFs look when you reduce them from 256 to 128, 64 or even 32 colours.

Optimising JPEGs
Optimising JPEG images works in a different way. When an image is saved in JPEG format, it uses a mathematical formula to record what the colours in an image are. In general terms, it saves space by working out that pixel 1 is black, and so is pixel 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. Instead of storing the data for each pixel individually, it notes that 8 pixels in a row are black. If you multiply this over a complete image it can be reduced in size considerably. To make images even more compact, the JPEG image throws away image data. Unfortunately, once the data is discarded the image cannot be restored to its original condition. That's why the quality of small JPEG files is so bad compared to larger files.

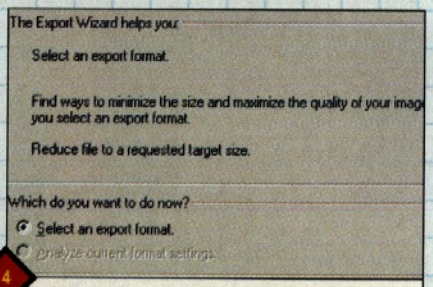
STEP 1: GET ANIMATED



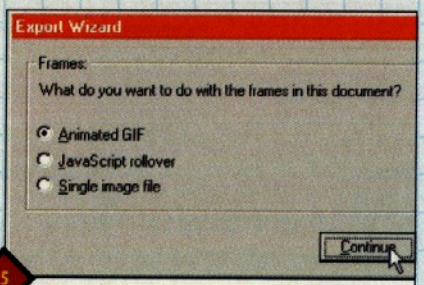
1 Go to the File menu and select the 'Open Multiple' command. In the file selector, choose your animation frames, add them to the loading list and select 'Open as Animation'. Click 'Done'.

2 When the images have loaded, go to the Window menu and select 'Frames'. When the Frames property Inspector opens, click on the 'Looping' and select 'Forever' in the drop-down menu.

3 Now you must set the time delay for each frame. Double-click on 'Frame 1' and enter 150 in the Frame Delay box. Make sure the Include when Exporting option is selected. Repeat for Frame 2.



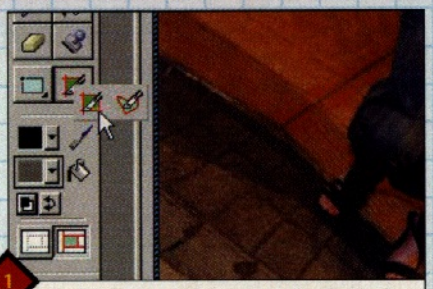
4 Go to the File menu and select the 'Export Wizard' command. When the Export Wizard window opens, click on 'Continue'. In the next screen, select the Animated GIF option and click 'Continue'.



5 In the Export Preview window click on 'Options'. The Format option should read Animated GIF, the Palette should be Adaptive and the number of colours should be set at 256.

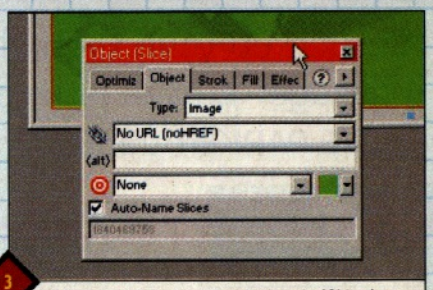
6 If you click on 'Animation' you can see how long the animation will last and set the animation to loop continuously. If it is satisfactory, click on 'Export', enter a file name and save.

STEP 2: SLICING THINGS UP

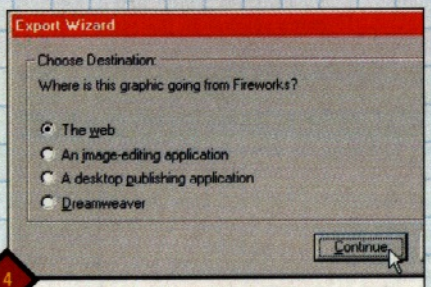


1 To slice a picture into pieces to improve downloads or create an image with built-in rollovers, load an image into Fireworks and then select the 'Slice' tool from the main toolbar on the left of the main screen.

2 Use the Slice tool to select areas of the image you want to cut into slices. You can create several large slices or you could cut the image up into smaller sections depending on what you want to do.

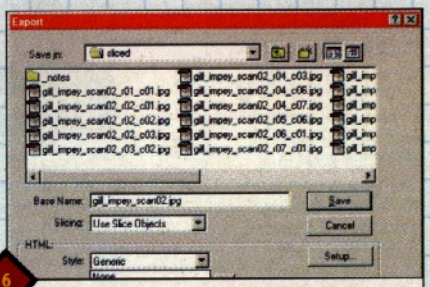


3 Go to the Windows menu and select the 'Object' command to open the Object property inspector. Make sure that the Auto-Name Slices option has been selected.



4 Go to the File menu and select 'Export Wizard'. On the first page, click on 'Continue'. On the next page you have to choose the destination for the graphic. Select 'The Web' and click the 'Continue' button.

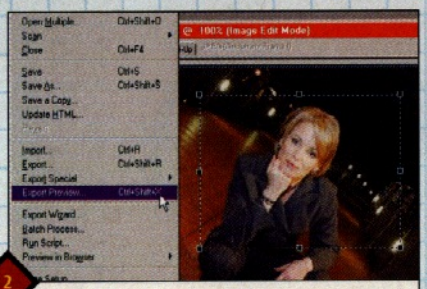
5 On the Export Preview page, click on the 'Options' tab so you can select the format of the image and the quality. Eighty per cent is a good setting for a JPEG image. Now click on 'Export'.



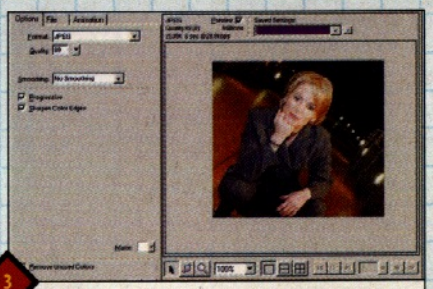
6 In the Export file selector, select 'Using Slice Objects' in the Slicing drop-down menu. In the HTML box, use the menu to define the code for the HTML that displays the sliced image, then click on 'Save'.

STEP 3: A LITTLE BIT OF THIS AND THAT

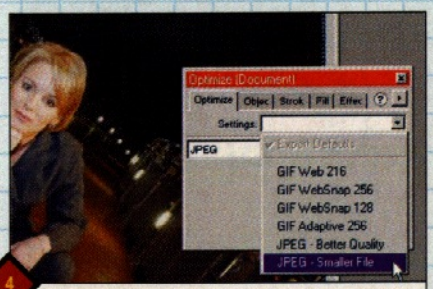
1 If you want to select a chunk of an image to save as a separate file, go to the main toolbar and select the 'Export Area Tool' by clicking on the 'Pointer' and selecting it from the pop-up bar.



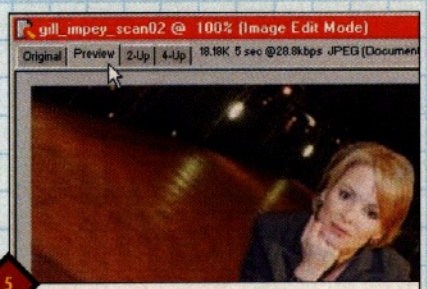
2 Use the Export Area Tool to draw a marquee around what you want to export. Use the handles to adjust the size as required. Now double-click inside the selected area to open the Export Preview window.



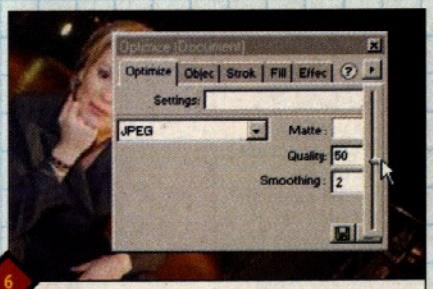
3 When the Export Preview window opens, click on the 'Options' tab so you can select the format and the quality of the image. Once you are satisfied, click on the 'Export' button and save your file to disk.



4 Fireworks is great for optimising image sizes. Open an image and go to the Windows menu and select the 'Optimize' command. In the Optimize property inspector, select 'JPEG – Smaller File'.



5 To see what your image looks like when optimised, click on 'Preview' at the top-left of the image window. You can flick back and forth between the two versions of the image.



6 If you want to reduce the quality even further, go to the Optimize property inspector and select the button next to the Quality option. You can use the slider to adjust the quality level up and down.

Advanced: Canvas 7

OBJECTIVE

To use some of the advanced features in Canvas 7 to wrap text, create vector masks and export as HTML.

Spruce up your Web site with this feature-filled graphics package. It even lets you save your designs as HTML files. **CLIVE PARKER** dabs at his canvas to make sense of it all...

Huh?!

THOSE TERMS EXPLAINED

Bitmap graphics

Bitmapped or bitmap graphics are computer images represented on-screen as arrays of bits stored in memory. These separate bits represent the various attributes of the individual pixels that make up an image with one bit per pixel in a black and white display and multiple bits per pixel in a colour or greyscale display. Bitmapped graphics are typically used by paint programs that treat images as collections of dots as opposed to whole, defined shapes.

Handle

A handle is one of several small squares that are displayed around an object in a drawing program. You can use the handle move, resize or reshape the object by clicking on a handle and then dragging it to where you want it. Handles are commonly used in vector graphics applications such as Canvas 7 because vector graphics can be resized without there being any loss of quality. Bitmap paint programs such as Photoshop do not use handles.

Vector graphics

Vector graphics are images that are generated from mathematical descriptions. These descriptions are what determines the position, length and direction in which all of the lines are drawn. Objects are created as collections of lines rather than as patterns of individual dots or pixels. This means that a vector graphic image, font or illustration can be displayed at any size without there being any loss of image quality.

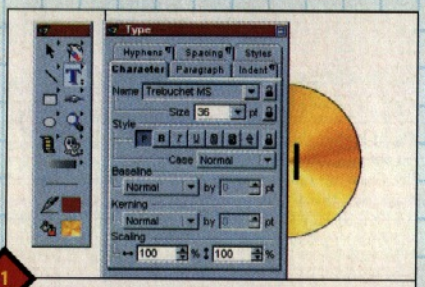
GREAT graphics make a Web page stand out from the crowd. If you can jazz up the look and feel of your page, you can practically guarantee that visitors to your site will return on a regular basis.

Of course, to make great images and illustrations you must have some artistic skills. But even an enthusiastic amateur can use great tools to create good-looking graphics with very little effort. That's where Canvas 7 comes into the picture (no pun intended).

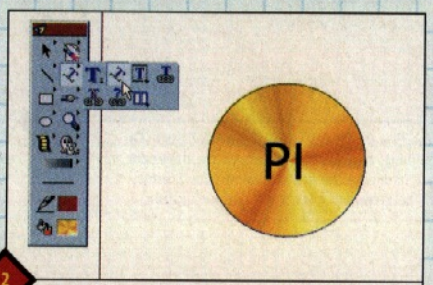
Canvas 7 is a professional level illustration program with a price tag to match. But for the price you get a top-notch application that can effortlessly handle both bitmap and vector images. It doesn't matter if you use Canvas 7 to create new illustrations from scratch or if you use it to manipulate existing images.

There's no denying that Canvas is a big, complex application. But with a little time and experimentation, you can come up with great illustrations. You'll find a free demo version on the cover CD.

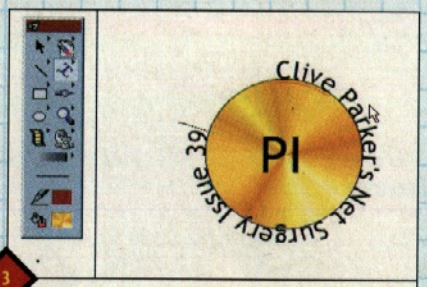
STEP 1: TEXT ON THE PATH



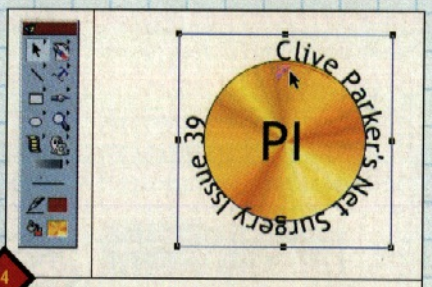
1 We're going to wrap text along a path around a circle. Create a filled circle then go to the tool palette and double-click on the 'Text' icon. Select a font and a size and click on the 'Apply' button.



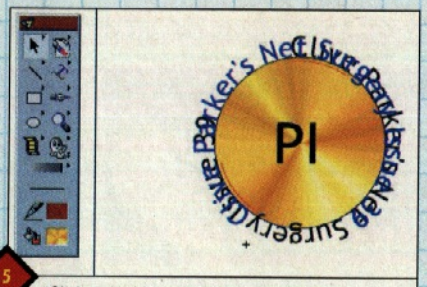
2 Close the text preferences window. Now select the Path Text tool from the text toolbar – the letter T at an angle with a wavy line beneath it. This tool enables you to run text along a path.



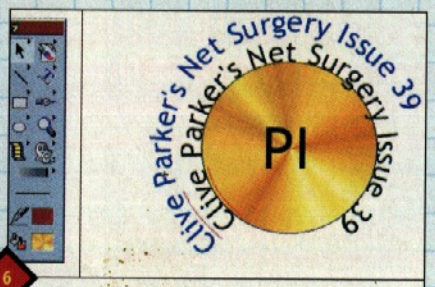
3 There's a thin dashed circle around the solid circle in your illustration. Move the cursor over the dashed circle and click on it when the vertical text insertion bar appears. Now type in your text.



4 To finish editing your text, press the 'Escape' key. At the start of the text three small handles appear, two small triangular handles and a small square handles. You can use these to manipulate the text.



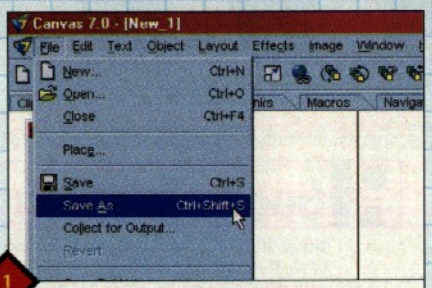
5 Click and hold the top-right triangular handle – the Alignment handle – to change the start position of the text. Drag the handle to the position you want the text to appear. Release the mouse button.



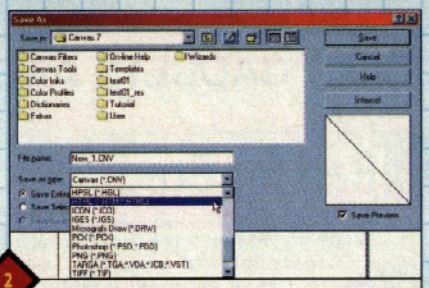
6 Use the other triangular handle – the Baseline Shift handle – to change the elevation of the baseline relative to the circle. This drags the text nearer to or farther from the centre of the circle.

ON THE CD Internet

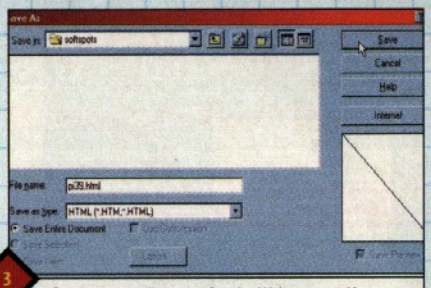
STEP 2: SAVE ILLUSTRATIONS AS HTML DOCUMENTS



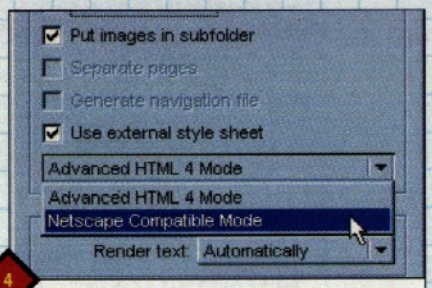
1 Canvas 7 has the ability to save your work as Web content in HTML, JPEG and GIF image format. After creating an illustration for the Web, go to the File menu and select the 'Save As...' command.



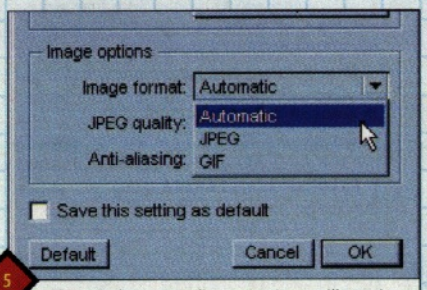
2 When the Save As file selector opens, navigate to the location where you want to save your Web content and then select HTML in the drop-down Save as type: menu.



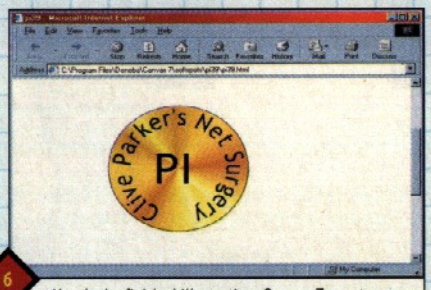
3 Create a new directory for the Web content if you wish and open it. Make sure the Save Entire Document option is selected, choose a file name for your work and then click on the 'Save' button.



4 The dialog box offers you choices. It's an idea to store images in a separate folder, so use the subfolder option. You can also choose to create external style sheets and HTML 4 or Netscape compatible modes.



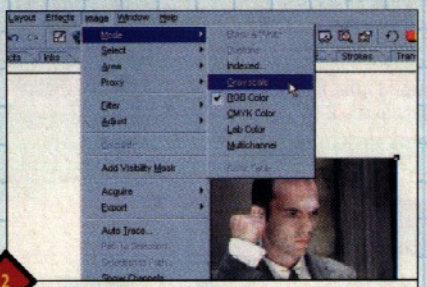
5 If you don't want to edit any text in your illustration once it is in the Web page, select the 'Render Text Automatically' option. It's a good idea to let Canvas decide what image format is used.



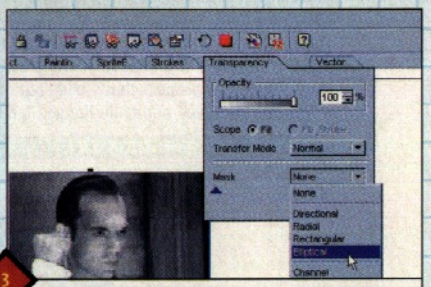
6 Here's the finished illustration. Canvas 7 creates Cascading Style Sheets and JavaScript as required when saving a file, so your illustration on the web will look as good as it does in Canvas.

STEP 3: USING VECTOR MASKS ON PAINT OBJECTS

1 Finally, we're going to create a vignette style image using an imported image. Go to the File menu and select the 'Place' command. Choose JPEG in the file type and select an image.

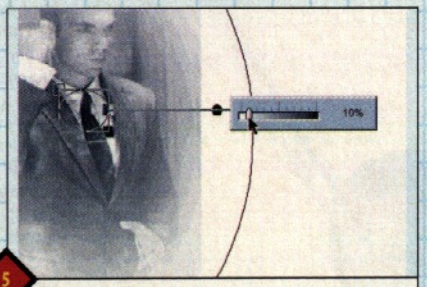


2 Vignettes look better in black and white. Go to the Image menu and select 'Mode'. Now select 'Greyscale' in the sub-menu. When you are asked if you want to discard colour information, select 'Yes'.

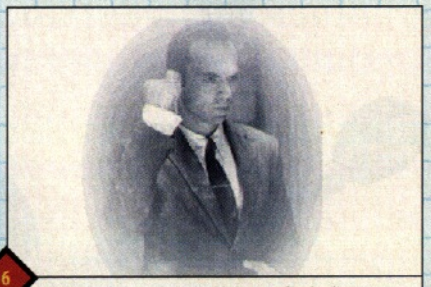


3 When the image has been converted to Greyscale, click on 'Transparency'. Go to the Mask section at the bottom of the Transparency toolbox and select the 'Elliptical' command in the drop-down menu.

4 An elliptical mask appears around the image. You can use the handles in the centre box to alter the shape and size of the ellipse. Click on the handle at the right edge of the box to change the size.



5 To change the opacity of the mask, right-click on the node in the line between the inner and outer ellipses. An opacity slider appears, use the mouse to adjust the opacity of the mask to your liking.



6 And that's just about it. Make any final adjustments to the opacity and position of the mask and click on the 'Escape' key to finish. Save your image to disk and you have created a great vignette image.

Hardwi

GOODIES, GADGETS AND GIZMOS

Bad for Brads

DO you want to get your ugly mug on the Net? Maybe you just want to talk face to face with friends that you've made online. If this is the case, you're going to need a camera to do the job. The DU-C300 is a high resolution digital video camera that displays images in an impressive 64 million colours. Pictures are refreshed at a rapid 30 frames per second, which should hopefully eliminate the feeling of talking to a photograph. The camera uses special light-sensing technology and requires no video capture card or additional hardware. Touted as a "complete audio visual communications systems", it also comes with a hands-free microphone and audio visual software. If this product takes off, describing yourself on the Net as looking like "Brad Pitt on a good day" or "a younger Claudia Schiffer" could become a thing of the past.

PRODUCT:	D-LINK DU-C300
PRICE:	£75
CONTACT:	www.dlink.co.uk

Good vibrations

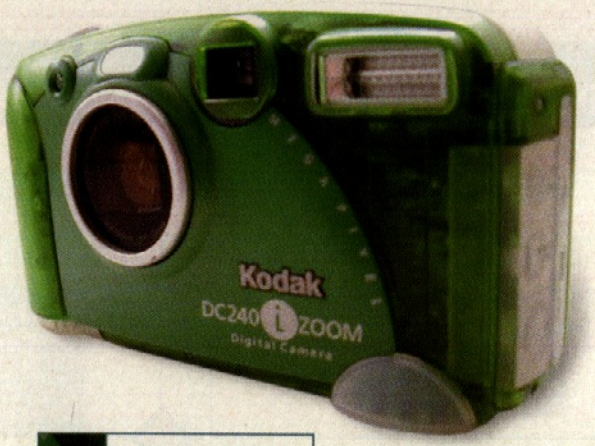
BACK in issue 32 we gave you a glimpse of what the future holds for MP3 players with the SoulMate. Now the SoulMate MP3 player is a reality – and how it has changed. Gone is the awkward and chunky design, and in has come a small, sleek and compact device. Connect the SoulMate to a device known as the Portable Music Store and you can happily download over an hour of CD-quality music in less than 10 seconds. The player also has the rather sneaky capability to be used in retail music stores to record the latest top 10 music singles or selected albums. And with no moving parts that will disturb the flow of music, all of the tracks will play normally during even the strongest of vibrations. Rock on Tommy.

PRODUCT:	SOULMATE
PRICE:	£99.99
CONTACT:	www.mp3-go.com

Over the moon

THIS headphone and microphone combination from Plantronics has been designed with voice activated software and MP3 files in mind. The SR1 headset is described as "durable" and "comfortable", and features a high-sensitivity microphone that minimises distortion and cancels background noise. This is useful if you're using software like IBM's ViaVoice Millennium to surf the Web (see Infonation in PI34). The headset is lightweight and adjustable for minimum irritation, which is probably why Neil Armstrong used Plantronics cans for his lunar landing. A product that's truly out of this world. [Our hardware writer has been well and truly flogged for this awful pun – Ed].

PRODUCT:	PLANTRONICS SR1
PRICE:	£22.99
CONTACT:	www.plantronics.com/emea

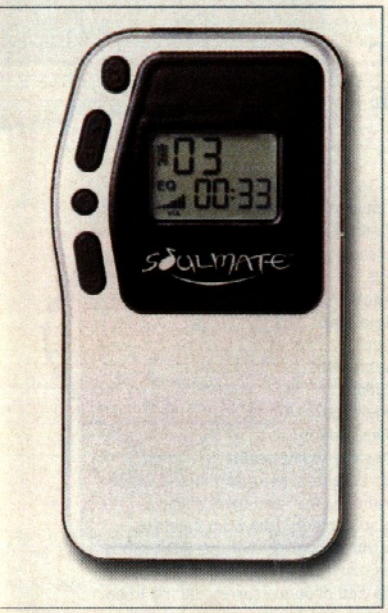


Five alive

IT seems nothing is safe from the influence of the iMac. Based on its DC240 digital camera, Kodak have decided to being out the translucent DC240i. And why not. Available in five tasty colours – blueberry, tangerine, lime, strawberry and grape – this snapper delivers an impressive 1280 x 960 pixels per image. As a USB device you simply point the camera, take a picture and transfer it to your computer – 10 times faster than using a serial interface. If you want to get up close and personal, there's a 3X optical and 2X digital zoom facility. And once you've hit the trigger, the colour LCD allows you to check you've got the perfect picture.

PRODUCT:	KODAK DC240I
PRICE:	£449.99 incl. VAT
CONTACT:	www.kodak.co.uk

red

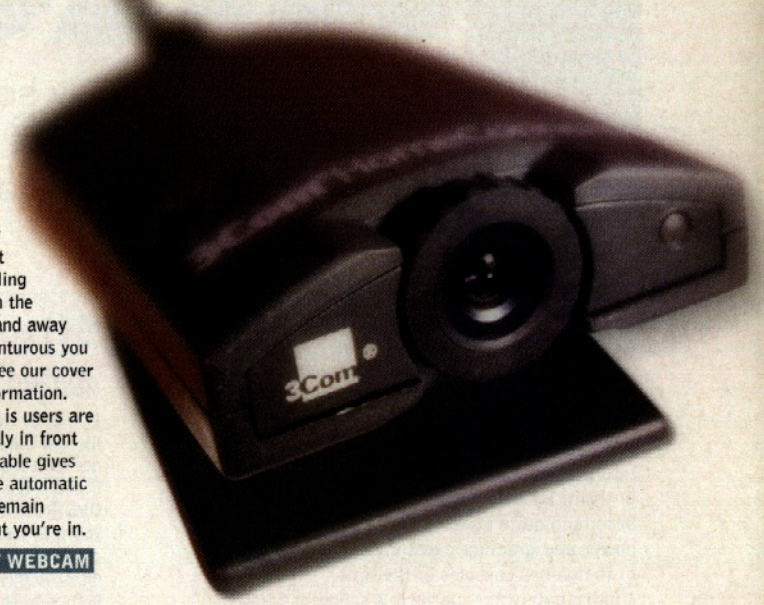


Lens a hand

IF you want to stay in touch with friends and family around the world, the 3Com Home Connect PC Digital WebCam could be a worthy investment. This tiny device fits neatly onto PCs and laptops, and enables Net users to capture and send still and rolling video images over the Internet. Attach the footage to an email, hit the send key and away you go. Or if you're feeling more adventurous you can have a go at Web conferencing. See our cover feature starting page 24 for more information.

A great advantage of this WebCam is users are not restricted to images that lie directly in front of their PC. An detachable nine foot cable gives much greater scope for shots while the automatic low light adjustment ensures images remain bright and clear, whatever environment you're in.

PRODUCT:	3COM HOMECONNECT WEBCAM
PRICE:	£129.99
CONTACT:	www.3com.co.uk



Discworld

FANATICAL MP3 fans will tell you CDs are as outdated as 14.4k modems. They may have a point but for the time being, discs remain our favourite way of listening to music. In recognition of this, Pine has unleashed the D-Music SM-200C. About the same size and weight as a Discman, this clever invention will play both conventional and MP3 CDs. Buy your music from the shops or burn your own special selection – the choice is yours. Over 100 MP3 track can be squeezed onto one CD, with each track title visible on the LCD display. Other features include a 10 second anti-shock buffer and auto search. But contrary to what you might have read in other Internet mags, you cannot record MP3 files directly onto this device. Get your facts right, guys.

PRODUCT:	PINE D-MUSIC SM-200C
PRICE:	About £199
CONTACT:	www.pine-dmusic.com

Take 5

Does 'CD-quality' only sound like 'cheap radio quality' with your PC? If so, it's time to consider a new set of multimedia speakers. **MARTIN PIPE** sounds them out

MANY, many years ago, the PC was seen as a business tool. The only concession to audio was a tiny speaker that 'bleeped' when you turned it on, or did something you weren't supposed to. In the late 1980s, PCs moved into the home. Kids started to take an interest in them. By that stage, PCs had started becoming quite powerful, with processing power and graphics capabilities far in excess of the games consoles of the time. Unfortunately, the platform's sound had not described a parallel evolutionary curve. Those with PCs cast envious glances at owners of Macs, Amigas and STs, all of which had decent sound built-in as standard. Two companies, AdLib and Creative Labs, spotted the gap in the market and started introducing hardware to redress the balance. Of these, the Adlib was nothing more than a basic music synthesiser and it soon fell by the wayside. Creative Labs' Soundblaster also had the capability to record and play back digital audio, and became the industry-standard. Indeed, every soundcard worth its salt has a 'Soundblaster-compatible mode'.

You get what you pay for

Today's descendants of the Soundblaster – and their 'clones' – offer CD-quality 16-bit recording/playback, realistic 'wavetable' synthesisers, MIDI support and even four-channel surround-sound. Unfortunately, modern soundcards are restricted in their potential by the speakers they're used to drive. Rubbish speakers mean rubbish sound. Invest in a better set and you'll be amazed at how good PC audio can be. The ultimate solution is to hook up the card's low-level 'line' output to a decent hi-fi system's 'aux(iliary)' input. Sadly, most people keep their PC hardware and audio equipment in different rooms. The practical answer for most people is to replace the supplied speakers. In the remainder of this feature, we'll examine five speakers. All are 'active' types – that is to say they incorporate (mains-powered) amplifiers. They need to be fed from the soundcard's 'line' output. Some soundcards only have a high-level speaker output, but many of these can be converted to deliver the required line output by changing jumpers. Note that feeding the following units directly from a speaker output will result in distortion and possibly damage.

Altec Lansing

ADA880

IT may be rather expensive, but this isn't just any old speaker set. Top of the desirable features list is a Dolby Digital decoder. If you have a DVD player, or a DVD-ROM drive and decoder card inside your PC, then you'll be able to enjoy crystal-clear surround sound from movie discs. To this end, the ADA880 comprises a hefty subwoofer (which also contains most of the electronics) and four smaller 'satellites'. Two of these – the 'fronts' – are placed on either side of the screen, while the other two – the 'rears' – are cited behind the listening position. One of the 'front' satellites contains the operating controls (volume, treble/bass and surround mode). The subwoofer has connections for the satellites, and two inputs. First and foremost is a digital coaxial phono socket, which is fed with the Dolby Digital output from your DVD player or decoder. There's also an analogue stereo input, which would be connected to your PC soundcard's line output. Stereo sources can benefit from the ADA880's Dolby Pro-Logic mode, which retrieves the surround information from Dolby Stereo sources (including some computer games). Although Pro-Logic isn't quite as good as Dolby Digital, it's still rather effective.

Digital delight

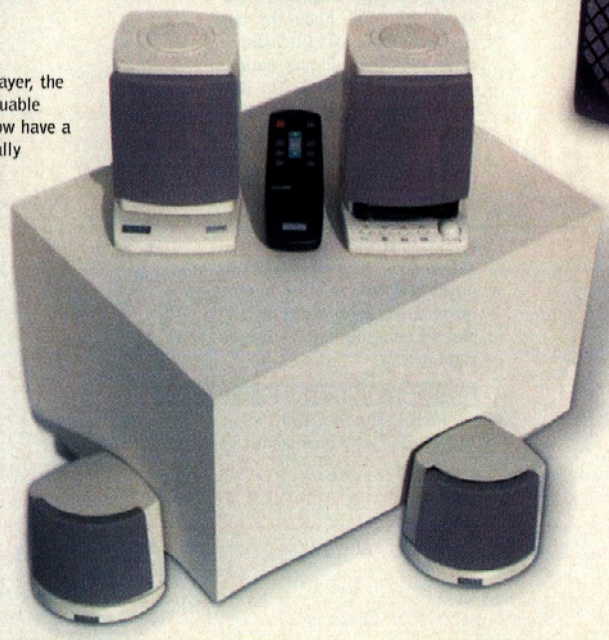
Even if you don't have a DVD player, the digital input may still have a valuable application. Many soundcards now have a digital output, which was originally intended for MiniDisc recorders and the like. Connect this to the ADA880, and your computer's stereo or mono output will be decoded by the unit and fed to the appropriate speakers. But why bother? Sound quality, of course! The analogue audio circuitry of most soundcards isn't particularly brilliant by hi-fi standards, and in any case the proximity of high-speed digital circuitry inside a PC is often responsible for introducing unwanted background noise. We discovered that the digital connection yielded a noticeable improvement in clarity, over analogue. Unfortunately, the ADA880 doesn't have an optical input – it's thus incompatible with some digital-output cards (such as VideoLogic's SonicVortex2). Note that the Dolby Pro-Logic decoder is compatible with appropriately-encoded stereo sources, regardless of whether the connection is digital or analogue. The sound quality is impressive. Bass is deep, tuneful and on the whole articulate. Colouration is low, and there's also a fair amount of detail recovery (the front satellites include tweeters). Our only gripe with the ADA880 is that there's no dedicated centre-channel speaker. Instead, the effects and dialogue corresponding to on-screen action is distributed equally among the two front speakers.

SEAL OF APPROVAL Practical Internet

Contact:	Altec Lansing
Web:	www.alteclansing.com
Phone:	0208 847 9478
Price	£200

HARDWIRED SCOREBOARD

Features:	85%	No centre surround speaker
Ease of use:	95%	No superfluous features
Value:	95%	Worth it just for the sound
Overall:	92%	Worth the money



Teac

PowerMax 2000

LIKE Altec Lansing, Teac is another name well-known in hi-fi circles. And, like Altec Lansing's product, the PowerMax 2000 makes provision for Dolby Digital decoding. Unlike the ADA880, though, there's a centre speaker – which doubles up as a control panel. In addition to Dolby Digital and Pro-Logic, you get include 'hall' and 'theatre' surround effects modes for non-encoded material. Moving onto external connectivity, the Teac gives you an analogue input for your soundcard, and both optical and coaxial digital inputs. The Teac sub's bass output is rather flaccid and hollow-sounding. What's more, the front speakers (which deliver the all-important stereo channels) each rely on a single drive unit to cover mid-range and treble frequencies. As a result, detail recovery is rather restricted. That said, the surround soundstage does offer a slight improvement over the ADA880.

Contact:	Simply Computers
Web:	www.simply.co.uk
Phone:	020 8498 2100
Price	£257

HARDWIRED SCOREBOARD

Features:	90%	Centre speaker, optical input
Ease of use:	85%	Busy control panel
Value:	80%	Altec Lansing sounds better
Overall:	85%	Good, but not that good

VideoLogic

Sirocco Spirits

THESE two-way stereo speakers appear to be modelled closely on a hi-fi product of the late 1980s – Wharfedale's Active Diamonds. These popular pre-multimedia speakers were designed to bolster the audio performance of ghetto blasters, TV sets and the like. The Spirits can be partnered with such equipment, as well as PCs. One Spirit contains the amplification, input connectors and volume/tone controls. The other speaker is linked to the first via an umbilical cord. Unfortunately, there's only one tone control, which trades off treble against bass. That said, many soundcards have bass and treble adjustments, so this needn't be an issue. Sound quality is excellent – indeed, the Spirits are as good as some budget hi-fi equipment. They offer more mid-range presence than the tested sub-sat speakers (Altec Lansing included), little obtrusive colouration and impressive recovery of detail. Much of this can be attributed to the wooden cabinet, and the use of separate bass/mid-range ('woofer') and treble ('tweeter') drive units. However, low-end 'grunt' is not the Spirit's strong point. If bass is your bag, it's best to steer towards VideoLogic's revered Sirocco speakers, which specify a sub as standard.

Contact:	VideoLogic
Web:	www.videologic.com
Phone:	01923 260511
Price	£140

HARDWIRED SCOREBOARD

Features:	85%	Audiophile-style minimalism
Ease of use:	80%	Rear-mounted volume a pain
Value:	90%	Your money's in the sound
Overall:	85%	Quite foxy

Logitech

Soundman X2

THIS is a conventional stereo speaker system for multimedia PC use. You get two smaller 'satellite' units that handle the mid-range and higher frequencies for each channel. Both connect to the oddly-shaped subwoofer, which reproduces the lower frequencies common to both channels. Overall volume is regulated by a volume control built into one of the satellite speakers. All straightforward stuff, in other words. Although stereo imaging was fair, other sonic characteristics of the Soundman X2 were less than impressive. That said, the Soundman X2 is a definite improvement on many other multimedia speakers.

Contact:	Logitech
Web:	www.logitech.com
Phone:	(01306) 734300
Price	£80

HARDWIRED SCOREBOARD

Features:	80%	No nonsense...
Ease of use:	95%	...means no confusion
Value:	65%	Can buy better
Overall:	70%	They're good, but not great

Labtec

LCS-2514

SO far, none of the speakers tested make provision for soundcards with four-channel audio outputs. Fortunately, this Labtec can. Some of the four-channel cards should, in time, support software-based surround-sound decoding and so you'll be able to make the most from movies as well as games. The LCS-2514 specifies four satellites and a fairly compact subwoofer. There's no tone adjustment, although control over the level of rear and front satellites is possible courtesy of a pair of thumbwheels built into one of the satellites. Sound quality is very reasonable, although distortion is fairly obvious at higher listening levels.

Contact:	Labtec
Web:	www.labtec.com
Phone:	01252 629900
Price	£70

HARDWIRED SCOREBOARD

Features:	85%	Basics-only
Ease of use:	90%	Colour-coded wiring good
Value:	90%	Fair for what's offered
Overall:	87%	Not bad at all

WEB RESOURCES

www.dolby.com
More information on Pro-Logic and Dolby Digital surround sound

www.qsound.com
Home page of a software-based system that provides 3D listening experience from two speakers

www.europe.creative.com
Home of the Soundblaster creators, Creative Labs

www.real.com
RealAudio compression format

www.midifarm.com
MIDI resources, including song files

www.harmony-central.com/MIDI/Doc/tutorial.html
A MIDI tutorial

www.synthzone.com
MIDI and synthesiser resources, including software links

Huh?!

SPEAKER JARGON EXPLAINED

Active
Speakers that have the amplification built-in.

Rear
In a surround-sound system, this is the speakers that deliver ambient effects.

Front
In a surround-sound system, the speakers that deliver positional information related to the action on-screen.

Centre
In a surround-sound system, the speaker that delivers sound corresponding directly to the action on-screen (typically effects and dialogue).

Dolby Pro-Logic
A domestic analogue surround system intended to recover the rear and centre channel information buried within Dolby Stereo soundtracks.

Dolby Digital (or AC3)
Dolby's digital surround system, which offers two rear, two front, a centre and a dedicated subwoofer channel.

Subwoofer
A speaker dedicated to the reproduction of low-frequency information (typically below 150Hz). Only one subwoofer is needed, because there's little or no positional information at such frequencies.

Woofer
A larger speaker that's dedicated to the reproduction of low (bass) and the mid-range frequencies.

Clive Parker's NET SURG

You may think you can catch him out, but **CLIVE PARKER** can fix the trickiest of Net problems

No visible support

Q I use Cable & Wireless as my service provider and I have had no problems with them so far. I prefer to use Netscape Communicator as my browser and acquired Netscape 4.7 thinking that it would be 'all singing, all dancing' – the best thing since sliced bread. Wrong!

After installing it I kept getting crashes at regular intervals, and although I was logged on to the Internet, it requested my password before sending an email and then refused to accept it. I reinstalled the original version of Netscape and all was fine. I phoned the Cable & Wireless helpline (at 50p per minute) to get some advice on the problem. The support rep was really on the ball and he asked me what version I was using. When I told him, he advised me that Cable & Wireless do not support Communicator 4.7 in the UK. Would you please advise your readers about this so that they don't make the same mistake as I did? Thank you.

Mr A J Pritchett

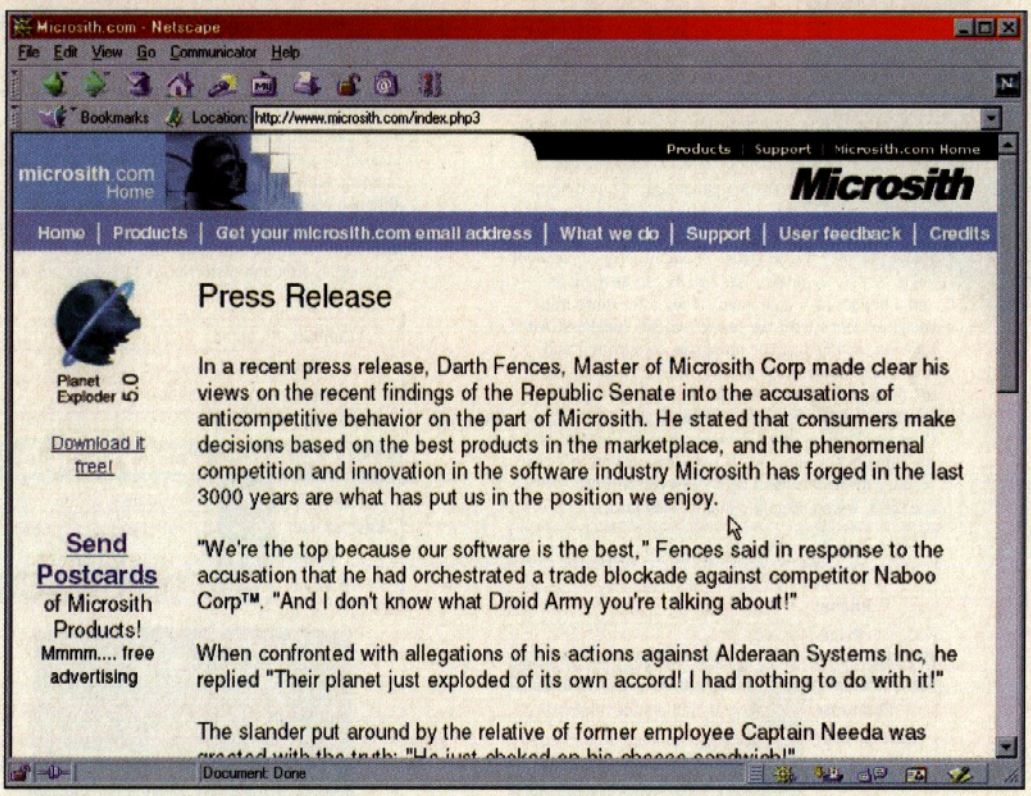
A That's very odd. If you use Netscape as standard with your Cable & Wireless account, upgrading to version 4.7 of Netscape Communicator should not make any difference. The settings from the older version should be transferred to the new version when you install it. In some cases, a service provider will embed settings into the browser so they cannot be altered, but the settings should transfer to the new version. But you are quite right about the lack of support from the helpdesk. It's the same with all Internet service providers, if you are not using the software provided on the installation disc, then they cannot help you. As a compromise, install Communicator 4.7 alongside your old version. Connect to the Internet as usual, then use the newer version of the browser to access the Web.

Sign o' the times

Q I read your Net Surgery pages with interest every month. With reference to the letter from Jo Padalino in issue 37, can you please explain in more detail, what exactly a 'signature file' is, what it does and why?

Peter Arnold

A Okay Peter, no problem. A signature file is a small text file that can be added automatically to the end of each email you send using your favourite email program. Because this file typically contains your name and some contact details such as your telephone number, it's called a signature file. Signature files are used to save



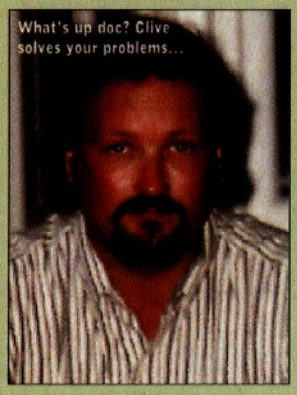
You should be able to upgrade to a newer version of Netscape Communicator without any problems, but they do sometimes crop up.

KEEPING YOUR FAVORITES

Q I would like to install the new Internet Explorer 5.01 from your cover disc, but I am worried in case it deletes all the Favorites that I've bookmarked. I don't want to loose them because in many cases, I wouldn't know how to find them again. Could you tell me if I can upgrade my browser and still keep all of the existing Favorites?

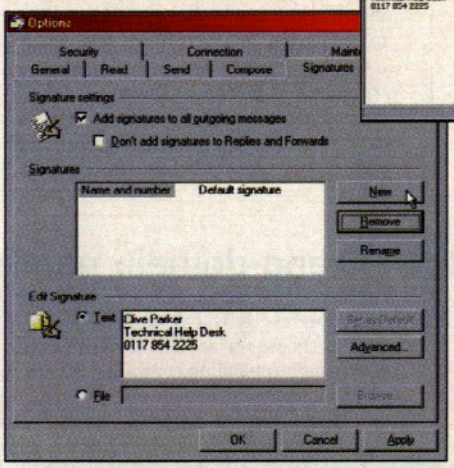
Norman Hodghton

A **There's no need to worry, Norman. You can go ahead and upgrade your Internet Explorer browser without losing any of the settings in your older version. Internet Explorer is designed to retain any settings you may have and carry them over into the new version. This includes the Favorites and any email and newsgroup settings you have in your current version.**

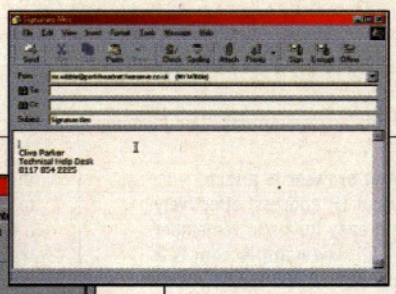

What's up doc? Clive solves your problems...

Send your questions by email to **helpdesk@paragon.co.uk** or fill out the Web-based form at **http://portishead.net/helpdesk.html**.

ERY



Open Outlook Express and go to the Tools menu, then select the 'Options' command in the drop-down menu. When the Options control panel opens, click on the 'Signatures' tab. To create a new signature, click on the 'New' button. Name the signature in the Signatures text box and edit the content of the signature in the lower text box.



The next time you create a new email message in Outlook Express 5, the signature text is automatically added to the message. Simply type your message above the signature and send it as usual.

time, if you send a lot of email messages every day then it can be a great asset. These screenshots explain how to set up a signature file in Outlook Express 5 on the PC.

Q Cry freedom

Why don't free Internet access providers have FrontPage Server Extensions available for their subscribers? I phoned Microsoft to find out the cost and they do not charge for them, the service provider simply downloads them from the Microsoft Web site. I was with FreeNetName but I have decided to let my membership lapse because I cannot get past a technical support person to get an answer about FrontPage Server Extensions. One techy said he would pass on my comments but I have never had a reply. Surely quite a few of its 100,000 members must use FrontPage to create Web pages? When I read the technical support pages I get the feeling that a lot of people are having trouble setting up their Web sites. Another service provider, Freezone, provides everything for free except FrontPage Server Extensions. It charges £99 per year for something it doesn't have to pay for. Surely this can't be right?

Phil Darcy

A It's true that Internet service providers can download and install the FrontPage Server Extensions from Microsoft for free. The problem is that – as is the case in a lot of businesses – installing, setting up and running the FrontPage Server Extensions can be a time consuming and costly business. Many service providers will not touch them because they find them to be too much trouble to maintain. Another reason service providers don't provide the FrontPage Server Extensions is because they only run on Microsoft's Internet Information Server on Windows NT servers. A large proportion of service providers run UNIX Web servers such as Apache, so they can't install FrontPage Server Extensions even if they wanted to. The final point is that – like a lot of Microsoft software – FrontPage Server Extensions are non-standard and not supported in the HTML specification.

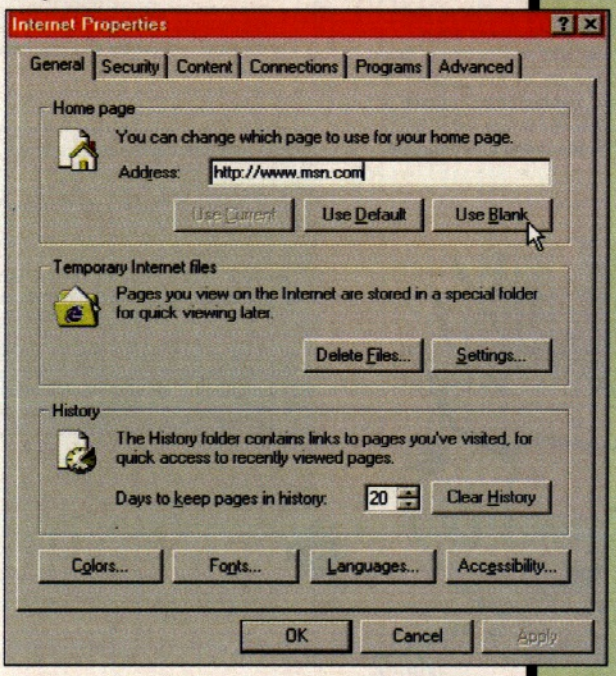
Q Eminent domain

It seems to me that the organisation that created the syntax for domain names was a little short-sighted to say the least. If the current multi-million numbers quoted for the number of people using the Internet in the UK is right and 10 million domain names have already been assigned, then the .co.uk domain is a little limited in scope. The alternative .ltd.uk and .plc.uk domains are effectively taken because they should match up with the business names registered at Company House. So are we likely to see a similar situation to the problem in the telecom industry with a lack of telephone numbers? Will Nominet have to change the format of domain names to allow more names to be created? After all, with so many people using the Internet there must be many sole traders and businesses wanting to use the same name.

Robin O'Neal

A The body that regulates the domain name system is aware of the finite number of IP addresses available for domains. The domain name you see

Use the Internet Properties control panel to make sure you don't connect to the Internet unless you really want to



STOP AND START

Q I tried to organise my Windows Start menu in A to Z order as you suggested, but when I right-click there is no pop-up menu. However, if I go through Start, Explore, Start Menu, Programs, the files listed under programs are in A to Z order. What do I do next?

On a different matter, when I try to access the Net using Internet Explorer the browser launches and asks me to sign up with the Genie even though my default server is CS3. It works fine with Netscape Navigator. Similarly, when I run Outlook Express it causes Internet Explorer to launch again and asks me to sign up with Genie. Is there a way out of this? Many thanks for your help in advance.

Husain Akhtar

A **I'm surprised that no pop-up menu appears when you right-click in the pop-up menu list in Windows 98, it works on every Windows 98 PC I've tried. I think you may be using Windows 95 if you don't get the pop-up menu. Then again, if you are using Windows 95 then the programs installed should be listed in alphabetical order anyway.**

I think your problem with Internet Explorer is caused because you have use a Genie installation CD at some point and the Internet settings are trying to open the Genie sign-up page by default. But you can change this quite easily. Go to the Start menu and select 'Settings', 'Control Panel'. Double-click on the 'Internet Options' control panel. On the first page – under the General tab – you can define what Internet Explorer does when it opens. You can set it up to go to a Web site of your choice by editing the Address line in the Home Page section. I usually start with a blank page because this lets me open the browser without connecting to the Internet. To set a blank page as the default, click the 'Use Blank' button and click the 'OK' button. The next time you open IE, a blank page will appear.

and type into your Web browser is a text version of the numerical IP address, effectively a text alias to make it easy for us to remember domain names. After all, **www.apple.com** is a lot easier to remember than 196.102.55.32 or whatever. The current IP address system uses four groups of numbers in the range of 0 to 255. The new system uses larger numbers ranging from 0 to 1023. This creates so many possible new IP addresses that it would be possible for every person on Earth to have several hundred domain names each. So there will definitely be enough domains to go around. But the problem still exists with the text version of domain names. If there is a company called Bikemart in London and another called Bikemart in Bristol, only one of them can have the bikemart.co.uk domain. In cases such as this, it's first come, first served when it comes to registering domains. But if someone registers a name that is a company's registered trademark, they may be forced to give up the domain name in favour of the trademark holder. So if you want to register your own domain, you had better do it now before somebody else grabs it first.

Q Wrong domain name

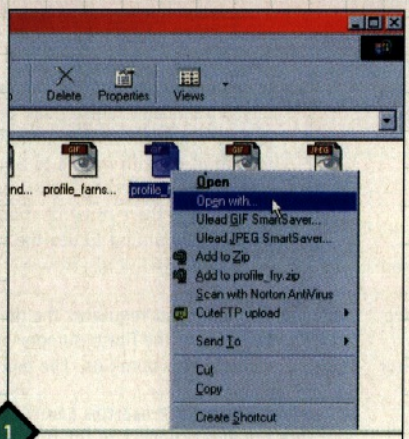
I have recently set up my own domain name using the FreeNetName service. When it was time to choose my domain name, I decided on **www.gundry-plumbing.co.uk**. But when I was given the option to choose my name from the options displayed, I rushed things because I didn't want to spend too much time online

THE GRIFTERS

Q I recently purchased issue 34 of *Practical Internet* and proceeded to check out the contents of the free cover disc. Because I already have Paint Shop Pro 4, I was interested in trying out the new version on the CD, Paint Shop Pro 6. Having checked it out, I decided that PSP 4 already suited my modest needs. As Paint Shop Pro 6 is only on a 30-day trial, I decided to uninstall it. However, I now find that all of my old files have been converted to Paint Shop Pro 6 documents, even ones that I did not view using Paint Shop Pro 6. Also any new files I now make since uninstalling Paint Shop Pro 6 are being saved as Paint Shop Pro 6 files. Is this a scam perpetrated by the makers to force me to buy their damn program? If not, how can I restore my images to their original format? I hope you can solve this problem for me.

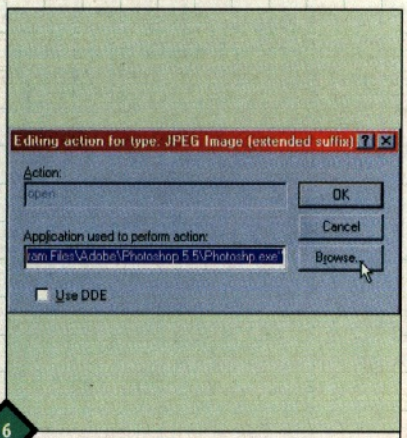
David Humphreys

A **You can still use the files in Paint Shop Pro 4 or in any other graphics program. The only thing that is different about the file is the icon. The actual files are still GIFs, JPEGs or whatever other format you use. Windows still has the Paint Shop Pro 6 icons stored somewhere on your system, and the files your create are associated with those icons. You can force Windows to use Paint Shop Pro 4 icons by following the procedure opposite.**

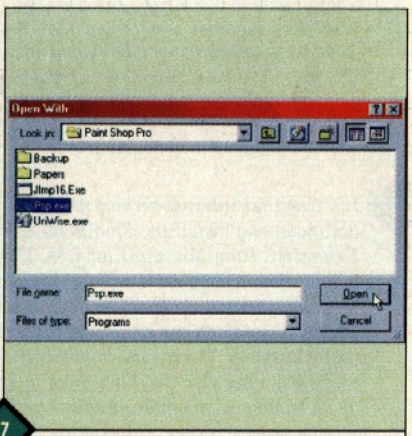


1 Click once on an image file that has an icon you want to replace. This highlights it. Now press the 'Shift' key and right-click on the icon and select 'Open with...' with from the pop-up menu.

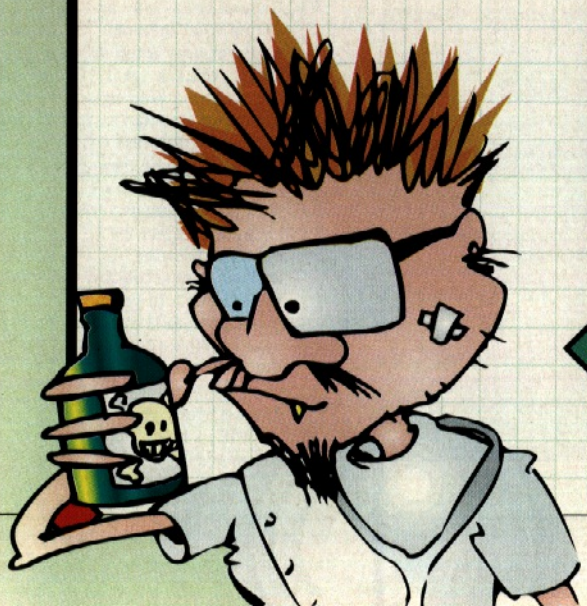
2 When the dialog box appears, scroll down the list of programs until you find the icon for your old version of Paint Shop Pro. It should be called PSP. Select the 'Always use this program to open this type of file' option and then click on 'OK'.



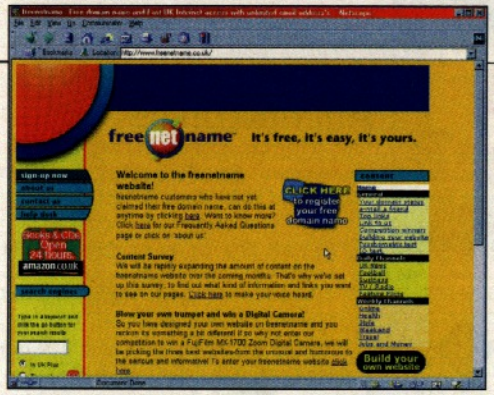
6 In the Editing dialog box, click on the 'Browse' button to find the program you wish to use to open the file type.



7 Use the Windows file selector to find the Paint Shop Pro program file. You will usually find it in C:\Program Files\Pain Shop Pro\ and the file name is PSP.EXE. Click on the 'Open' button and then click on the 'OK' button in the Edit window.



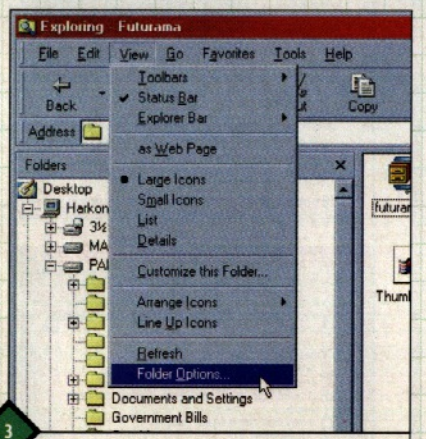
At FreeNetName you can set up your own domain for free. But make sure you get it right first time because you can't change it once you've selected a domain



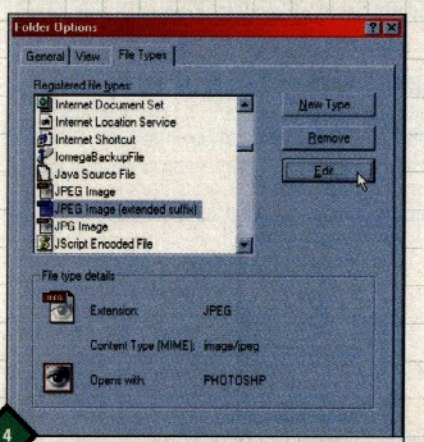
running up my phone bill. I had the choice of the .co.uk or the .org.uk addresses, but in my haste I picked the .org.uk domain. Am I right in thinking that .org addresses is reserved for charity organisations? I hope to set up my own Web page for my business so I really need to know. Because you only have one choice to set up your own domain name with FreeNetName, I would like your help on this matter.

Mike Gundry

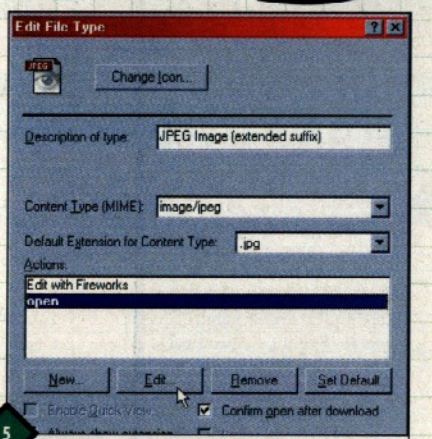
A Traditionally, .org and .org.uk domain names have been used by charity and non-profit organisations to differentiate them from the business domain names of .com and .co.uk. But it's only a guideline, not a cast-iron rule. Nobody is going to shut down your plumbing business Web site, say, just because it has a .org.uk address instead of a .co.uk address. Many businesses use the domain names.net and .net.uk, normally used by Internet companies. I own .com, .net, .org and .co.uk domain names, it doesn't really matter. So go ahead and create your site. Build it and they will come.



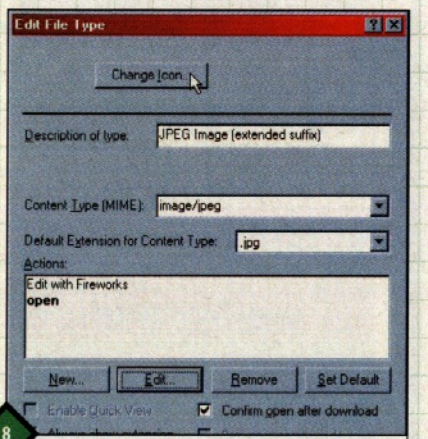
3 If that doesn't work, try this. Open Windows Explorer and go to the View menu and select the 'Folder Options' command.



4 In the Folder Options control panel, click on the 'File Types' tab and scroll down until you find the file type whose icon you want to change. Select it and then click on the 'Edit' button.

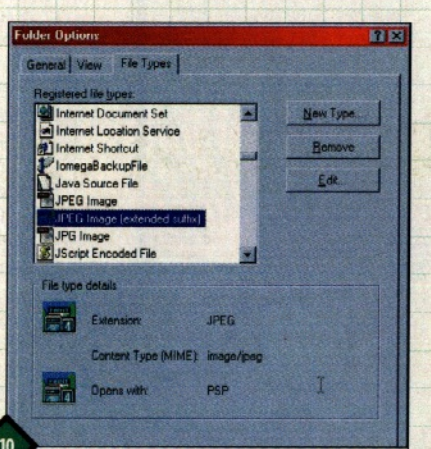


5 In the Actions box, click on 'Open' so it becomes highlighted and then click on the 'Edit' button.



8 In the main Edit File Type window, click on the 'Change Icon' button found in the top section of the window.

9 In the Change Icon window, click on the icon you want to use for Pain Shop Pro files then click on the 'OK' button. Now you have to close the Edit File Type window.



10 In the Folder Options control panel, you can now see that the original Paint Shop Pro icon has been assigned to the file type.

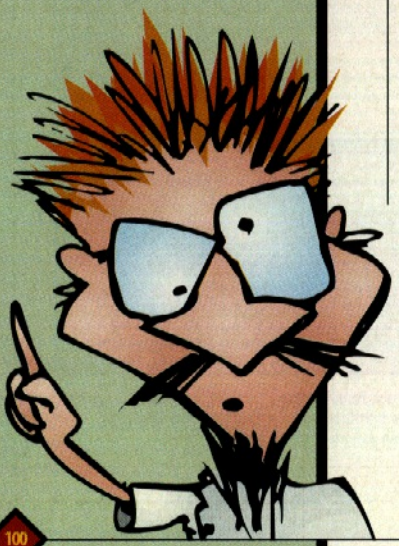
Flash is increasingly the Internet standard for animation

DEFAULT IS NOT MINE

Q I'm having trouble with logging on to my default service provider, Freeserve. I have installed Freeserve and Netscape Online, but when I double-click on the Internet Explorer icon on the desktop it tries to connect to Netscape Online. When I set up Outlook Express to always use FreeServe to get my email everything works okay. But the next time I start up my PC it reverts back to the Netscape Online connection. Is there anyway you can help me?

Bob Lambert

A **You need to change the default connection settings in the Internet Options control panel. Go to the Start menu and select 'Settings', 'Control Panel' and double-click on the 'Internet Options' control panel. Click on the 'Connections' tab. At the top of the screen is a list of installed connections labelled Dial-Up Settings. Click on the Freeserve entry and then click on the 'Set Default' button. Click on the 'OK' button and this should solve your problem.**



Animatronics

I am fairly new to Web site design and I use Microsoft FrontPage 2000, Animation Shop 2 and Paint Shop Pro 6. I want to create my own cartoon characters that I can animate and use on the Web. How do I do this?

Gary Lee

A All the software you have should be sufficient to create animations, although I am not familiar with Animation Shop 2. It's up to you how you create your cartoons. You could draw your characters freehand using pen and ink and scan them or you could create them in Paint Shop Pro 6. You might want to give some thought to the final format of the animations. You could present them as QuickTime (MOV) or Video for Windows (AVI) or as Flash animations (SWF). Flash is by far the most common animation format on the Web and about 88% of Web browsers have the plug-in installed. Find out more about Flash 4 at **www.macromedia.com**.

Assistance required

Q In Outlook Express, is there any way of deleting unwanted large emails without downloading them first? The tips we've read suggest opening the Inbox Assistant under the Tools drop-down menu, but the Inbox Assistant does not appear on our list of options – possibly because we run the Mac version? Here's my set up: Outlook Express version 4.01 running on an iMac with MacOS 8.5.1. I have lots of spare memory and hard space on my iMac if this is a factor. Any help would be gratefully received.

Mark Spedding

A The Macintosh versions of Outlook Express are not exactly the same as the Windows versions, but they are similar. I'm surprised you have Outlook Express 4.01. Version 4.5 has been available for quite a while from the Microsoft Web site and from our cover CD. And Outlook Express 5 is now available for the Macintosh, too.

You can download it from the Microsoft Web site, by visting **www.microsoft.com/mac**. I have looked for anti-spam utilities for the Macintosh on several sites but there doesn't seem to be anything. There used to be a product called Spam Blaster from Goo Software.

Install Outlook Express 5 and run it. It will automatically transfer your address book, contacts and email folders from the previous version. If you are worried about losing data, you can 'test drive' the new version. After installing Outlook Express 5 go to the 'Tools' menu and select 'Accounts'.

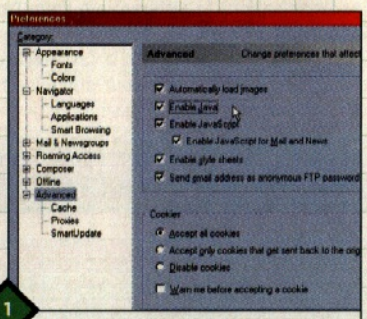
Click on the 'Options' tab. In the Server Options section, you can decide on the maximum size of the messages you want to download. The program also includes a set of junk mail filters and a customisable rules feature, so you can decide exactly what you want to do with your email. PI

HAMMERED

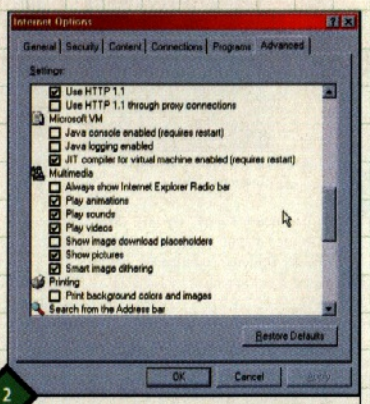
Q Ever since going online I've had a problem with my favourite site (**www.whufc.co.uk**). Every time I visit it, I'm greeted with a blue box with three shapes. When connected to the site from work, I saw a grey box with the latest news scrolling upwards. I realise that I am missing a plug-in to make this box work properly but I don't know which one it is. I recently downloaded Shockwave but that hasn't done any good. Can you tell me what is wrong with my machine and how I can correct it.

Rolston Holas

A **I've visited the site and the scrolling news box is actually a Java applet. This indicates that Java is disabled in your Web browser. It's easy to switch it on in Netscape Communicator and Internet Explorer 5, see the screenshots below...**



1 In Netscape Communicator, go to the Edit menu and select 'Preferences'. When the window opens, click on 'Advanced'. On the right you can see the settings for Java. Make sure that the Enable Java and Enable JavaScript options are selected.



2 In IE, go to 'Tools' and select 'Internet Options'. When the control panel opens, click on 'Advanced' and scroll down to Microsoft VM. To enable Java, make sure the option labelled 'JIT compiler for virtual machine enable' is selected. You will have to restart Windows for this to take effect.

3 And this is what all the fuss was about, the West Ham United Web site in all its claret and blue glory.

www.vitaminic.co.uk

free!

downloadable music in MP3 format

www.vitaminic.co.uk offers thousands of free tracks, classified in over 150 genres of downloadable music in digital mp3 format, from dance and hip-hop to jazz and world music.

Whatever your taste, you can now interact with your favourite artists, from all over the world, via our newsletters, email and charts. This is the future of the music. So what are you waiting for?

vitaminic

www.vitaminic.co.uk
the music evolution

dedicated-servers.co.uk

After months of planning and implementation the new WebFusion Datacenter is now open WebFusion have spent over 1 Million pounds creating the UK's most advanced web hostin data facility, featuring all the key facilities demanded by dedicated server customers. AP Symmetra UPS, FM200 fire supression, 250kw backup generator, Cat 2 lighting, 100M network, Cisco switches and routers, Ultra grade aircon & climate control, wate detection, CCTV, swipe entry & state of the art fire and intruder alarms. All server come complete with 2 IP addresses and 5GB bandwidth per month, and link t all WebFusion's datacenter facilities plus multiple fast internet connections

LINUX SPECIAL

The industry-standard OS for web hosting and internet services. Fast processor, generous memory & large hard drive pre-fitted, RedHat LINUX pre-installed. Apache web server, Perl 5, CGI, plus 2 IP addresses, 5GB bandwidth per month, & multiple internet connections.

Just £99.99 per month

COBALT RAQ3

The high-end 'Web-in-a-Box' solution. Easy to control, no jargon or systems knowhow req'd. Ideal for resellers who don't want to be 'techiebods', web designers, etc. Fast, well spec'd machines, ready to run, 2 IP addresses, 5GB bandwidth per month and fast internet connections.

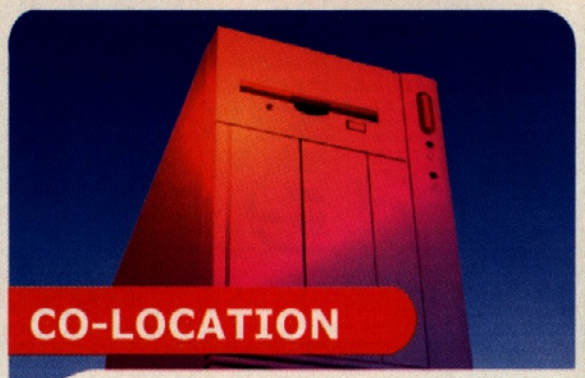
Just £99.99 per month

Book your Space in our £1,000,000 Datacenter - Home to Over 30,000 Domains

NT SPECIAL

The internet environment for Windows specialists. Ideal for MCSE/MSCP's, VB programmers, projects that need MS Office backend and/or ASP support. Fully spec'd machines with NT pre-installed, 2 IP addresses, 5GB bandwidth per month, & multiple internet connections.

Just £199.99 per month



CO-LOCATION

Your machine, our Datacenter. Any OS, any spec. Ideal for dedicated purpose machines, high-end resellers and 'part of the network' business webservers. 2 IP addresses, 5GB bandwidth per month allocation, with multiple fast internet connections.

Just £49.99 per month

WebFusion®
Seriously Easy Web Hosting®
GROUP MEMBER

0115 9170000

PRICES EXCLUDE VAT @ 17.5% AND ONE-OFF SETUP FEE
WE WELCOME PAYMENT BY CHEQUE, STANDING ORDER, CREDIT OR DEBIT CARD. E&OE.

ONLINE GAMING NEWS >>

Visit www.totalgames.net for the latest PC and online gaming news. Please email geoffs@paragon.co.uk with your news items, comments and ideas

REVIEW: DELTA FORCE 2: PAGE 104
REVIEW: NOX: PAGE 106

NETGAMER

What's shooting up on the Net this month? **GEOFF SPICK** is out there in the trenches, reporting on what's new

ASSIMILATING GAMEPLAY!

GET ready for battle, because the Borg are coming in Star Trek Voyager: Elite Force. The game is being developed using the fabulous Quake III engine and will throw you up against some of the nastiest species in the universe. You can expect the usual hot multiplayer action, presumably something along the lines of Capture the Bridge as well as an impressive single player story and adventure.

The game's plot unfolds much like a typical Voyager episode, when a marauding species captures the U.S.S. Voyager. Only a member of The Hazard Team can save the crew, the ship and the Galaxy itself. Commanded by Lieutenant Tuvok, you'll defend the Voyager from assault, battle through derelict spacecraft, infiltrate a Borg cube and take on the ultimate colonization force.

HOT NEWS

3dfx unveiled its new line of boards at CeBit in Germany with a hand from Lara 'Croft' Weller. Meanwhile, Intel in America demonstrated its next generation processor code-named Williamette running at 1.5Ghz. Almost time for upgrades all round then!

TOP DEMOS!

DOWNLOAD AND ENJOY

1. **Soldier of Fortune**
www.activision.com
FPS action doesn't get hotter, or bloodier!

2. **Allegiance**
www.microsoft.com
Huge multiplayer 3D space combat affair.

3. **Imperium Galactica II**
www.gtgames.com
The biggest, best space strategy game yet.

Let loose the dogs!

NOT-A-QUAKE-III-ENGINE-GAME shocker, Dogs of War from Silicon Dreams and published by Take 2 is due this summer. Up to eight players can slog it out with tanks, troops and gunships in this hi-octane tactical action game.

The graphics look impressive and with hundreds of units milling around at once, it certainly looks like providing an immense challenge to the gamer with its fast moving engagements and on-the-spot tactical decision making. Fighting between three factions with over 35 unit types and 25 single player missions make this one to watch.

Bond, Quake Bond

JAMES Bond is coming to the PC in a game powered by Id's Quake III Arena engine. Electronic Arts will publish The World Is Not Enough this Christmas and other games based on the licence of the world's most famous secret agent will appear later. Lets just hope the game is of the same quality as the N64's superb GoldenEye and not the PlayStation's rushed and critically mauled version of The World Is Not Enough.

Publisher:	Novalogic
Web:	www.novalogic.com
Requirements:	Pentium II, 64Mb RAM, TNT, TNT2, and ATI Rage Fury supported
Price:	£34.99

DELTA FORCE 2

Just how Special are your Forces?

The squad combat genre is once again gathering momentum, with more games offering increased scope and detail. So what does NovaLogic's latest have to offer? Well the graphics engine is a little better than last time but still no where near the detail of Hidden & Dangerous or Rainbow Six. But looks aren't everything and Delta Force is created using advice from the real life unit so you can be guaranteed that the missions are pretty realistic.

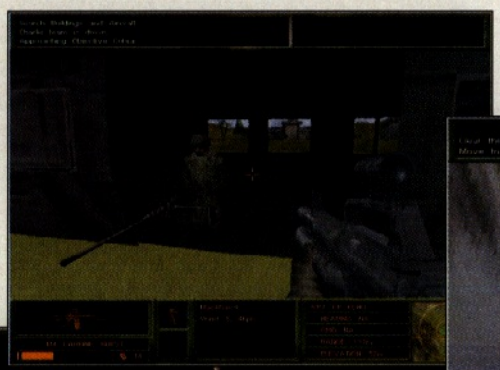
Improvements over the last edition include a new commander's screen for planning and monitoring battles and general enhancements including terrain concealment and the usual new weapons, including a marvellous machine gun combination called the Keymaster. There are also new, more varied missions including night and aquatic ventures. These are set pretty much all over the world but given the limited Voxel graphics, everywhere looks very much alike, just in different colours.

Where Delta Force hasn't got in with the act is its use, or rather lack of, 3D hardware. Currently only the TNT chipsets are supported but hopefully patches will add more compatibility. Talking of, the latest patch includes a new multiplayer game mode called Search and Destroy, so they are worth getting hold of.

In battle you'll advance as either a lone fighter or as part of a squad of soldiers, taking out enemy forces from long range using your sniper scope before getting up close and personal. Battles can rage indoors and around built-up areas so there is always a surprise coming. To help out, you often get support messages and assistance from other forces, such as air support or eyes in the sky to guide you through a mission.

Feel the force

Despite the basic graphics, Delta Force 2 is a lot of fun to play, with compelling missions and an easy going style of play that will keep you enthralled, unlike some of these games where it all gets a bit heavy going and you give up in frustration. Generally, you start off heading for a waypoint, sniping your way through the enemy patrols to get to the objective. Once there, vicious firefights can break out with tracers flying all around you. Make use of the highly varied terrain to provide cover as you retreat or advance



On some missions you'll be active when in the helicopter allowing for some cool Apocalypse Now action

You can use the sniper scope to take down the enemy soldiers from long range

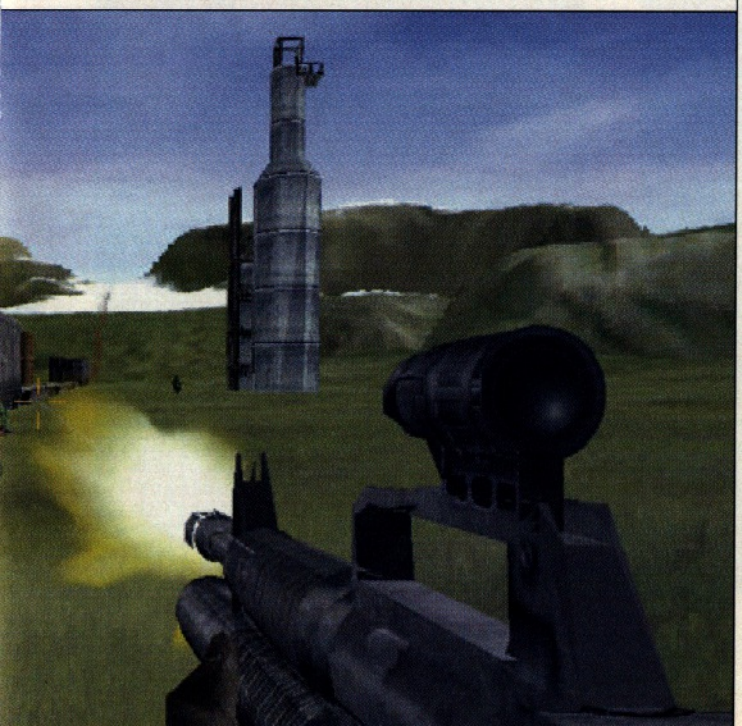
Your squad mates will provide fire support and useful advice on the location of the enemy as you sneak around

under the hail of bullets. Weather conditions or the darkness of night add to the confusion and you can often turn a corner right into an enemy patrol and have to fight them from mere metres, a terrifying prospect. Your soldier can take the odd flesh wound but death is quick to make his presence felt should you stray one step too far. With missions and campaign objectives ranging from blowing up SCUD launchers to rescuing stray atomic weapons and locating genetic viruses across the continents, there is bodybags of gameplay in Delta Force 2 and you're generally too engrossed to notice the blocky images. The team aspects are pretty limited and don't compare to more detailed games, but it does add to the happy-go-assassinating atmosphere of the overall game.

Once you've had enough of the single player missions, you can get online with Novaworld and go on a whole new killing spree with up to 50 other Deltas from around the world. This is barrels of fun with team, deathmatch and other games to keep you playing for hours. All Delta Force 3 will need is a top-notch graphics engine, and perhaps some more realism to be the best of the bunch. We've never heard of an incidence where being shot in the foot turned out to be fatal, and the enemy soldiers could do with being a little bit smarter. That aside, Delta Force 2 is good fun in true NovaLogic style. You're guaranteed a lot of stealthy shooting action.

DELTA FORCE 2 SCOREBOARD

Graphics:	70%	Voxels are not impressing anyone these days
Sound:	75%	The rustle of bullets through grass is scary!
Features:	78%	Engrossing missions
Online:	87%	Novaworld will be swamped
Overall:	81%	DF2 is ugly but engrossing!



Ask Yourself this Question?

How fREE is your FREE ISP?!

	Monthly Cost for Weekend Internet Line Usage	
	30 hrs	50 hrs
FREE ISP	£18*	£30*
PurpleNet	£9.99	£9.99

If you think your FREE ISP is completely FREE THINK AGAIN?

FREE ISP's may not charge you a subscription but you still have to pay for the time you spend online. With PurpleNet's NEW Internet Call Plans you can casually browse the Internet on WEEKENDS without paying a penny in call charges....All this for just a flat rate monthly subscription of £9.99 +Vat.

* standard local call rate

includes 25MB OF WEBSPACE
UNLIMITED EMAIL ADDRESSES
LOCAL RATE TELEPHONE SUPPORT

0845 117 0370
www.purplenet.co.uk

PURPLENET

Developer:	Westwood
Web:	www.westwood.com
Requirements:	Pentium 200 MMX, 32Mb RAM, 3D Card Not Required, Players 32
Price:	£34.99

If you decide to play as a wizard then you'll need someone to teach you how to do the flashy light stuff, this bloke should do

NOX

Get ready for the school of hard Nox!

Nox is a fantasyland, a wondrous world stricken by magical wars. You, unfortunately, are trailer park trash, about as magical as a burger bun, accidentally sucked into this world and tasked to restore balance. Your mission is to rescue a powerful orb held by an evil queen, but that's getting ahead of things.

You arrive on Nox in just your jeans and a T-shirt, hardly the stuff of heroes. You can choose to play as a fighter, mage or conjurer. Each class takes a different path through the game and will see many unique events, naturally they all have very different combat styles, so you replay the game once you've finished it. Early encounters and training will get you used to the mostly mouse interface and concepts of the game. There is nothing too radical that you haven't seen in other games of this ilk. You eat food to heal, open barrels and chests to find items. Surely Westwood could have come up with some different interactions, other than the same old barrels and chests to break away from monotonous role playing standards? Anyway, you can wear and equip a whole treasure trove of items to improve your abilities and make you better at killing imps, scorpions, skeletons and the other 40 or so creatures in the game to gain some vital experience.

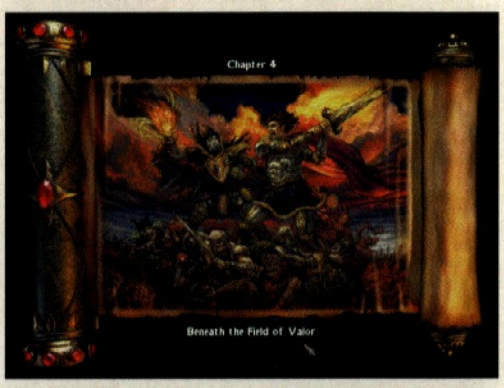
Each segment of the game is prefaced by a nice bit of art and the usual booming announcers voice

Nox is initially similar to Delphine's recent Darkstone but it's much faster, looks better and comes with a little more variety. The crushing hands that crash down from off-screen are cool, the plot has an occasional sense of humour and is fun to play. Pop-up books describe your spell capabilities and you have a bestiary and journal that aide you in killing things and remembering what to do. Item and spell menus also let you keep those in order and easily to hand via quick key shortcuts.

Where Nox differs greatly from any other title is in its dedicated multiplayer modes. Deathmatch, Elimination, CTF and other modes make for great link up over Westwood's Online service or you own connections. Nox doesn't rock the action RPG boat enough to cause a major upheaval in gaming but the Gauntlet meets Diablo style will give it wide appeal and the online side could develop a huge following.

DELTA FORCE 2 SCOREBOARD

Graphics:	75%	Isometric wizardry is pretty dated
Sound:	79%	The usual clang of swords
Features:	82%	Bags of replay value
Online:	85%	Get ready to gauntlet
Overall:	82%	Fast, fun and furious fantasy action!



If you are new to PCs and the Net, you need clear, jargon-free guidance in the basics. That's what Paragon Publishing's 'Made Easy' magazines are for. These unique beginners' magazines, available from all good newsagents, are colourful easy-to-understand and perfect for novices.

made easy

Start here...

Look out for the new 'Made Easy' brand – you're guaranteed beginner-friendly tutorials and no jargon!

Internet Made Easy

Internet Made Easy is the complete guide to getting on the Net. The magazine kicks off with photo guides to getting your PC or Mac online, before explaining exactly how to, send email, use the Web and more.

ONSALE DATE: Issue five onsale January 20
PRICE: £1.99

New launch!

Windows Made Easy

Windows Made Easy is the ultimate resource for people who've just bought their first PC. Everything you need to know about Windows is explained in clear, jargon-free tutorials, and the magazine is crammed with hints and tips.

ONSALE DATE: Issue 20 onsale January 27
PRICE: £3.99

The UK's best-loved Windows magazine for beginners

To order copies or subscribe, call 01202 200200

Web Pages Made Easy

Once you've figured out the basics of connecting to the Net with Internet Made Easy, why not have a go at making your own Web site? Web Pages Made Easy is the magazine you need to do this. Includes packed CD of the best Web-site creation software.

ONSALE DATE: Issue six onsale January 13
PRICE: £3.99

Reserve them now

made easy

Name .....

Address .....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Phone number .....

Postcode .....

Guarantee your copy of the 'Made Easy' magazines by completing this form and giving it to your newsagent. Please reserve me a copy of Internet Made Easy, priced £1.99, on a regular basis (ISSN: 1465-6965) ☐

Please reserve me a copy of Web Pages Made Easy, priced £3.95, on a regular basis (ISSN: 1464-7424) ☐

Please reserve me a copy of Windows Made Easy, priced at £3.95, on a regular basis. (ISSN: 1461-2631) ☐

These titles are published by Paragon Publishing (tel 01202 299900) and are available from your local wholesaler. The magazines are distributed by Seymour (tel 01202 299923) and are fully SOR.

What's on the disc?

With fully working programs of Online Call Manager and Print Artist 3, along with all the usual great software and Web site builders, we've another great disc for you

How to use the CD

Running the disc

Minimum recommended specification to run the *Practical Internet* CD is a 640 x 480 screen resolution, 16Mb RAM, 16 Bit colour, Windows 95/98 (note we do not support Windows 3.1) and an Intel Pentium or compatible 166MHz.

Machines with a lower specification than above will still be able to run the cover disc interface and install the software from it. However, they may find the interface does not perform to its optimum capacity. Please shut down all other applications when running the CD.

Your cover CD will autorun in Windows 95/98. For users without autorun enabled go to the start menu, select RUN and type X:\PI.exe (replacing X with the letter of your CD drive) and press 'Return'.

Disc problems

Damaged discs: We will be please to replace any disks that are cracked, scratched or snapped upon purchase. Return them to the following address: Cover Disc Returns, Paragon Publishing, Paragon House, St Peter's Road, Bournemouth, BH1 2JS.

Missing discs: If you have purchased the magazine or subscribe and have not received your cover CD please phone **01202 200200** and they will be happy to send you out a replacement disc. You can email **subs@paragon.co.uk**.

Problems

Call the disc helpline weekdays between 10am and 5pm on **01202 200259**. Please be ready with the issue number of the magazine and it also helps us deal with your enquiry if you sitting at your computer when you phone. Alternatively you can email us on disceditor@paragon.co.uk.

We regret that this we cannot offer technical support on the use of the software once installed, these enquiries should be referred to the software manufacturers. Any problems arising from the use and/or installation of the Internet service providers should refer to the relevant ISP as listed on the following pages.

Disclaimer

All software on this CD is tested for known bugs and viruses. Paragon Publishing will not accept liability or responsibility for loss or damage that occurs directly or indirectly from usage of this disc. We will replace discs that have been damaged in transit or at the place of duplication, upon return to our offices.

Online Call Manager

Never miss a telephone call again when you're surfing the Net!

IT'S happened to all of us at some time or another. You've gone online and you've missed an important telephone call. It's annoying and frustrating. But now, fortunately, it need never happen again if you make use of the fully working version of Online Call Manager on this month's CD.

This clever program offers a subscription-free service that notifies you of incoming calls while you're on the Net. Best of all, it doesn't require a second telephone line. In other words, you can stay on the Web and stay in touch at the same time.

Fully working program!

Online Call Manager allows you to instantly and easily manage all of your incoming calls, whether you are using the line for Internet access or using a remote number, such as your home telephone from your office.

When a call has been received, the details appear in an interactive pop-up window on your computer screen, providing free Caller ID indication of who is calling and presenting eight options to manage that call, including a subscription-free voice mail service with on-screen notification of messages.

It also lets you divert to other fixed or mobile telephones of your choice. You can also transfer the call to your PC, keep surfing and talk directly over the Internet or even play pre-recorded greetings or your own personalised messages to the caller.

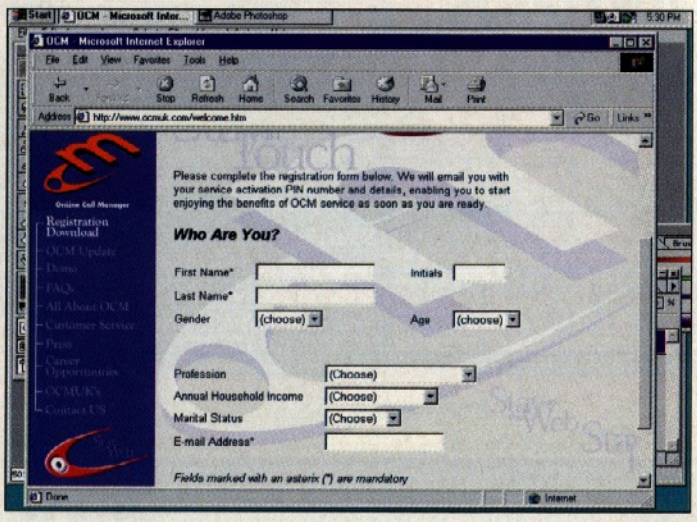
Online Call Manager also includes OCM Alert – a separate pop-up window that lets you see whenever any of your friends or colleagues who you have entered in your OCM Alert list are online – similar to instant messaging services.

How to start Online Call Manager

INSERT your free *Practical Internet* cover disk into your PC and select 'Online Call Manager' from the Full Versions section. You will need to visit OCM's Web site at **www.ocmuk.com** and click on the 'Registration/Download' key to get a free password emailed to you. If you encounter problems, please contact the OCM Customer Care Centre on **0906 331 0000**.

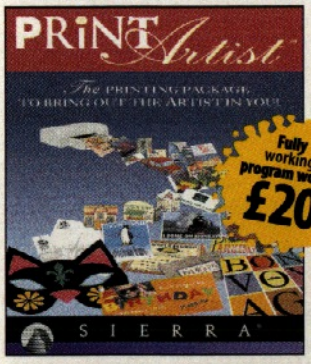
What it costs to use OCM

While the OCM software here is completely free, there are a couple of charges you should be aware of. You'll need to subscribe to BT's Call Diversion service, which costs £1.33/month. It is this service that allows incoming calls to be sent to OCM's servers if your phone line is busy or there is no reply from the numbers being monitored. OCM also makes a charge of 10p/minute for any call that's diverted.



Create great Web graphics!

IT'S important that your Web site looks great if it's going to be popular with Net users. Great graphics and other imagery helps to break up the text on your pages and make your site interesting to read. With this in mind, here's a fully working program to create some artwork.



Print Artist 3, worth £20, lets you create signs, business cards, letterheads, certificates, greetings cards, banners, postcards, envelope and even calendars in no time at all. A number of different effects can be applied to your images, including different colours, text alignments, shapes, fonts and even drop shadows and cut outs.

You can insert your own text and graphics or use the default settings to create fabulous looking images in a flash. These can then be exported in popular file formats, such as TIFs, and adjusted in other graphics creation packages for use on your Web site.

NEW NEOPLANET 5.1 IS OUT OF THIS WORLD!

New version of Web browser launched

IF you're getting bored with the boring look of Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator, then maybe it's time you took a look at a Web browsing alternative. NeoPlanet is one option that's well worth considering in light of the launch of its new 5.1 version.

Available in the Soft Spot section of the cover CD, it offers numerous improvements over previous versions, including the addition of FlySwat, a searching facility that delivers answers on-the-fly. Replacing the Alexa service from previous versions, FlySwat helps you quickly and easily find the right information on the Web.

Instant messages

For those who enjoy a natter on the Net, there's also an enhanced instant messaging facility through NetClubs. Among the requested features that have been added are a new Club Away mode, new Alert features, the ability to Cut/Copy/Paste text from and to your instant message and group chat windows, the ability to save and print your conversations, and also new save/view/manage options for your messaging history.

If the huge amount of hard disk space needed to run Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator annoys you, you'll be glad to know NeoPlanet is now under 2Mb. Even better, NeoPlanet will deliver future upgrades in the background so you will always have the latest version and never need to wait for a long download again!

System addict

NeoPlanet can now also be run as an icon in the System Tray. This much-requested feature adds speed and convenience by letting you add NeoPlanet to your Startup folder. This feature also ensures you will never miss new email and instant messages whenever you are online.

Indeed, the email features have also improved. You can now import email from other popular applications like Outlook, Netscape, Eudora and Outlook Express. Other changes include some 13 fixes on the previous version of NeoPlanet. You can find out more at www.neoplanet.com.

Gamble on the Internet

Enjoy an online flutter – you may strike it lucky!

Acropolis Casino

This program brings you the experience of playing in an exciting and fast-paced gaming club – but in the comfort of your own home. It features elegant casino graphics, multimedia sounds and video animation.

You can play for practice offline by entering the Gaming Parlour and choosing to play Blackjack, Roulette (American or European), and Video Poker. Then, when you're ready to begin wagering real money, simply connect to the Internet, go to the Account Services room to create an account, make a deposit (by credit card, wire transfer or cheque) and click 'Play Online' to play online for real money.

Kenny Rogers Casino

An online gambling program from country and western singing supremo, Kenny Rogers. Yeah, we smirked when we came across this one, too. It really has to be seen to be believed!

Casino Internationale Curacao

Lets you play six casino games as well as sports betting, and gamble for real money across the Internet (or play offline for fun on your own PC).

You can choose to play Blackjack, Caribbean Poker, Roulette, Craps, four Slot machines (with up to 95 per cent payouts and up to $10,000 jackpots), and four Video Poker machines (including Jacks or Better, Deuces Wild, Joker Poker and All American). Sports betting lets you make parlay, teaser and straight bets on football, basketball, hockey and baseball.

Casino Regal v3.02

Play five casino games and take part in sports betting with this program, which lets you gamble for real across the Net. Other games include Blackjack, Caribbean Poker, Roulette, four Slot machines, four Video Poker machines and a full Sports Book. It features 3D graphics, animation, and digital sound and voice. The rules for these games are based on the New Jersey Casino Control Commission regulations for Atlantic City casinos.

OMNI Casino v3.02

OMNI Casino lets you play seven casino games as well as sports betting, and gamble for real money across the Internet (or play offline for fun on your own PC).

Caribbean Sands Online Casino & Sportsbook

Offering enhanced 3D rendered graphics and animation, digital sound and voice, and full context sensitive help, this is a fun-filled gambling program that lets you play seven casino games as well as sports betting. Casino games include Black Jack, Caribbean Stud Poker, Roulette, Craps, Baccarat, Pai Gow Poker, Let It Ride, Red Dog, and Keno.

InterCasino Live

A virtual casino that lets you play with other players over the Net and gamble with real money. InterCasino comes with 25 casino games, multiplayer Blackjack, multiplayer Roulette, multiplayer Baccarat, Red Dog, Keno, Baccarat, Pai-Gow Poker, five Video Poker machines, and includes Sports Betting. InterCasino also gives you the ability to chat with other players online from within the lobby of the casino or as you play one of the multiplayer games. The program provides full electronic cash (Ecash) support with VISA and MasterCard transactions, bank wire transfers, money orders, personal cheques and prepaid cards, and provides real time CryptoLogic data security for all transactions.

PLEASE NOTE: These gambling programs should not be used by under 18s. They do involve real money and you can lose as well as win. We take no responsibility for any losses incurred – but you're very welcome to send us a cut of your winnings!

What's on the disc?

Home Improvement

IF you haven't built your own Web site yet or simply want to add some spice to your existing one, you've come to the right place! We've put together a great selection of software to help you build a hot-looking site.

This includes HTML packages to create your pages, graphics programs to add images, and some great submission tools for letting the search engines know that you're pages are online. Refer to the Home Improvement section of the magazine on pages 55-60 for more.

AddWeb 3.12
Web site submission utility
Licence: 30 day trial

CoffeeCup GIF Animator
Design Web banners and graphics
Licence: 15 day trial

CoffeeCup HTML Editor
Web page authoring package
Licence: Shareware

Coolmap 3.0
Image map creator
Licence: Freeware

CuteFTP 3.0
Popular file transfer client
Licence: 30 day trial

Exploit Submission Wizard 5.0
Batch URL submission tool
Licence: Shareware

HomeSite 4.0.1
Web page editing package
Licence: 30 day evaluation

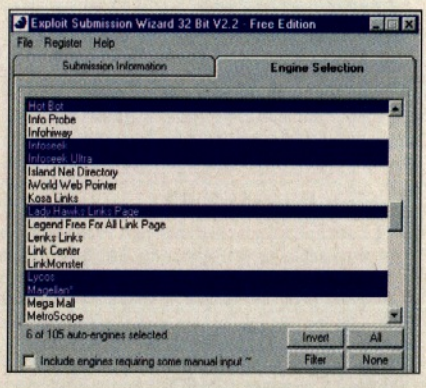
HotDog Express
Template based Web-page creator
Licence: Shareware

Lview Pro
Image processor
Licence: Time limited evaluation

Ulead Photoimpact viewer
Image conversion utility
Licence: Shareware

URL Cook
Mail form decoder
Licence: Freeware

WS_FTP
FTP client software
Licence: Limited version



Soft Spot

YOU'LL find the following programs in the Soft Spot section of the CD.

PureSight
PureSight uses content-sensitive filtering technology based on 'artificial intelligence' to block access to sexually explicit or pornographic material on the Web.

Canvas 7
Try out this high-end Web page creation package, which boasts a number of extra facilities such as a complete graphics editing package with a similar interface to Photoshop.

DigiGuide
DigiGuide is a computerised version of a printed TV guide. It appears on your computer screen, is up-to-date, provides lots of information for each program, and suggests programs you may be interested in watching.

AOL Instant Messenger
Brand new version of the highly popular instant messaging client that can be used by anyone on the Net.

Outlook Express
This excellent email utility provides a wide range of features, including support for HTML mail; support for POP3, and email messages from Netscape, Eudora, Microsoft Exchange Server and Outlook.

Pegasus Mail
Pegasus Mail is an email package that can be used in a wide range of environments. Features include message encryption using a very secure algorithm, the ability to have up to 64 attachments per message and phrases and mail filtering.

Eudora Light
This is an extremely popular email package that includes features such as simple rule-based message filtering, drag-and-drop capabilities, clickable URL links, and the ability to leave mail on the server instead of automatically retrieving it.

NetMail
A fully-featured email client. NetMail's interface is designed for speed and ease-of-use. The program provides support and administration capabilities to assist you in managing multiple email accounts. NetMail can automatically remove duplicate addresses from a list of addresses and processes unsubscribe requests.

Foxmail
Foxmail is a simple email package that supports multiple accounts. It offers all of the standard features you would expect in an email package, including a message preview window, HTML message viewing, an address book, an Inbox assistant, and remote mailbox management. It also handles multiple POP3 accounts.

MAC ESSENTIALS FOR THE NET

WE'VE COMPILED A FANTASTIC COLLECTION OF TOP MAC SOFTWARE – ALL OF WHICH YOU CAN FIND ON THE COVER CD

MAC ESSENTIALS

Aladdin Expander 5.5
Uncompresses a range of file types
Licence: Shareware

Canvas 7
High-end Web page creation package
Licence: Demo

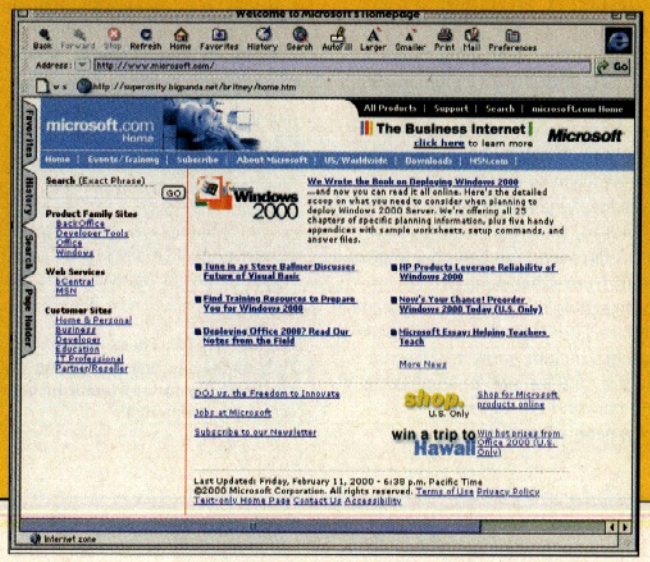
DropStuff 5.5
File compression utility
Licence: Freeware

Eudora Light 3.13
Email client
Licence: Freeware

ICQ 1.7.2
Communicate with others online
Licence: Freeware

Internet Explorer 4.5
Microsoft's Web browser
Licence: Freeware

MacAMP 1.0 Preview Edition
Multi format audio player
Licence: Preview

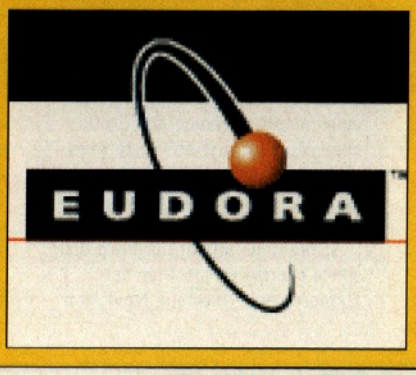


Microsoft Outlook Express 5
Newsgroup and email reader
Licence: Freeware

SoundAppFat
Utility to convert audio files and play them
Licence: Freeware

HOME IMPROVEMENT

Anarchie 3.7
Get your site online with this FTP utility
Licence: Freeware



Treasures of the Net...

YOU'LL find the following programs in the Net Treasures section of theCD. They're mentioned in the feature on pages 24-30.

Irisphone

Use the Net to make your telephone calls and you'll be amazed at just how much money you can save. It's simple to use and is quick to load – the only snag is that the person you want to talk to also needs similar software on their PC.

MicroPlanet Gravity

A powerful tool for accessing and processing information from Newsgroups. Integrated rules, view filtering, and scoring systems help to automatically identify important information and eliminate unwanted content. Built-in multi-server support lets you switch between servers with the click of a mouse. The Image Gallery also makes decoding, viewing and organising your images a snap.

Free Agent Newsreader

This is an excellent newsgroup reader. It has a superb user interface and it works both online and offline. Features include the ability to view images and binary attachments; an intelligent header and article database; multi-level article threading using both the subject and article ID so that you always know exactly what an article is in response to; quoted text highlighting; and a 'dip into it' feature for checking out all the latest newsgroups.

Microsoft NetMeeting

An Internet telephone tool that combines voice and data communications, video conferencing, real-time application sharing, file transfer, a full-featured shared whiteboard, and text based chat. NetMeeting allows you to communicate and collaborate using the Internet. It also lets you conduct audio/phone and video conferencing, share applications, work on a shared whiteboard, and use text chat or transfer files.

Hotline

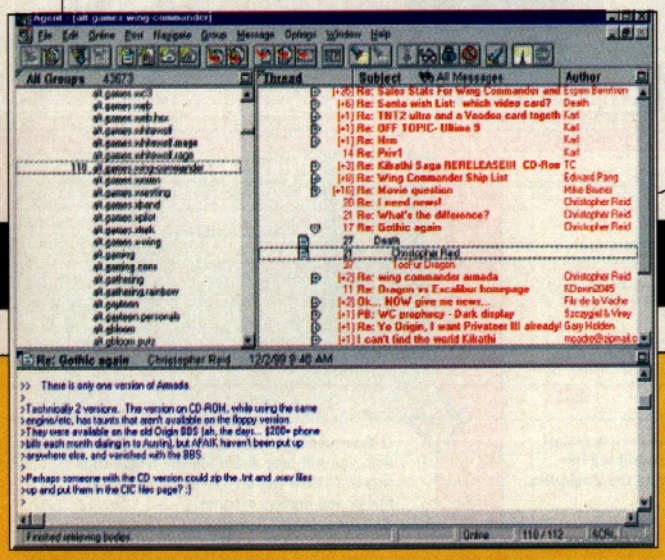
Hotline enables private and public 'virtual community building' and provides live interaction with real-time chat, conferencing and messaging. More than two million people already use Hotline to exchange information.

VDOLive Video Player

Lets you view streaming video across the Internet. It compresses video images without compromising quality on the receiving end. The speed of your connection determines the frame delivery rate. With a 28.8Kbps modem, VDOLive runs in real-time at 10-15 frames per second.

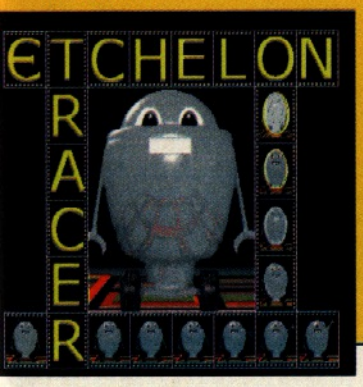
CU SeeMe

Conduct videoconferencing over the Web and see your friends as you talk to them! It's a cool way of chatting to people over the Internet and makes the whole experience that little bit more personal.



BBEdit Lite 4.6

HTML editor
Licence: Freeware



dumpTruck! 1.5.1

Batch URL submission tool
Licence: Freeware

Etchelon Tracker 3.1.3

Vector animation program
Licence: Freeware

Transmit 1.5

FTP utility
Licence: Freeware

FREE NET ACCESS

Virgin Net

Free Net access for Mac users

WEB ESSENTIALS

OUR ARCHIVE OF PC SOFTWARE THAT YOU SHOULDN'T BE WITHOUT

1st Page 2000

HTML and script authoring tool
Licence: Freeware

Aladdin Expander 5.0

Uncompress SIT and ZIP files
Licence: Freeware

Ativa DUN Meter 2

Internet connectivity utilities
Licence: Register after 15 days

Browserola

Emulate IE & Netscape browsers
Licence: Shareware

CuteFTP

File Transfer Protocol client
Licence: 30 day trial

Disconnector 2.5

Internet disconnection utility
Licence: Freeware

Download Accelerator

Use multiple connections to speed up downloads
Licence: Freeware

Easy MTU

Connection optimisation utility
Licence: Freeware

ecBuilder Pro

Create secure online trading
Licence: Demo

Eudora Light 3.06

Email client
Licence: Freeware

Forte Free Agent

Newsgroup reader
Licence: Freeware

F-Secure Anti-Virus

Transparent Virus Protection
Licence: 30 day trial

FTP Voyager

FTP client
Licence: 30 day trial

GIF Construction Set

GIF animation creator
Licence: Shareware

ICQ 99b Beta 3.19

Real-time chat program
Licence: Freeware

Internet Explorer 5.5

The new Beta version of Explorer
Licence: Freeware

InstaBase Web Ready

Database designer
Licence: Shareware

Neoplanet

Customise your IE4 interface
Licence: Freeware

NeoTrace

Trace the server routes of your Net connection
Licence: Shareware

Net Lightning

Internet connection optimiser
Licence: Freeware

Net Vampire

Resume and restart broken internet downloads
Licence: Freeware

Opera 3.60

Integrated browsing, Newsgroup & email client
Licence: Shareware

Palace 3.4.2

Audio/Visual chat software
Licence: Freeware

PGP

Encrypt files and email messages
Licence: Freeware

Sonique 1.05

Audio player with MP3 support
Licence: Freeware

Spam Hater

Fightback against spammers
Licence: Demo

Spamicide

Spam mail filter
Licence: Demo

Visual IRC

Real-time voice and video chat
Licence: Freeware

Web Ferret

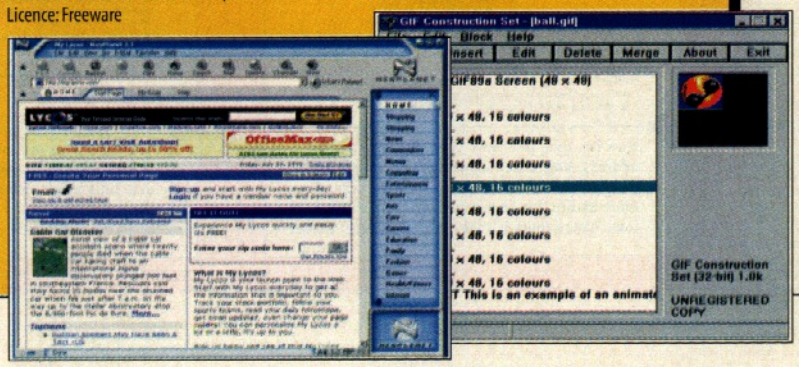
Search engine enhancer
Licence: Freeware

Web Washer

Removes banner ads for faster Web surfing
Licence: Free for personal use

WinZip 7.0

Compression and extractor utility
Licence: Shareware



Virgin Net

Free Internet access plus lots of superb content

If you're a theatrical sort, take advantage of Virgin Net's excellent Theatre section to keep up-to-date with all that's on

ON this issue's CD is a free trial from Virgin Net. This leading free ISP brings you the ultimate guide to what's on and where it's on, with its cinema, music, sports, travel and shopping channels. It's easily accessible and relevant to what's going on in the UK.

Excellent films and music

Put yourself in the picture with the cinema channel. Check out what's worth seeing and when you can see it in over 640 UK cinemas. And if you fancy yourself as a budding movie critic you can even post your own views to the site or discuss vital movie issues – like what is the sexiest movie scene of all time, or whether Vinnie Jones can really act.

Tune in to the music channel for news and reviews on album releases and gigs, and if you see a concert that takes your fancy, you can book your tickets online with Virgin Net.

www.virgin.net

Fantastic travel

If you're planning a trip out with friends or family, there's lots of great ideas for things to do – and you can find out what places are actually worth seeing. Or, if you are going further afield, the travel channel offers facts on hundreds of destinations, cut-price holidays and the latest weather and currency news.

Safe shopping

Even shopping is safe with Virgin Net. Take your pick from a long list of special offers, safe in the knowledge that you're protected by a Safe Shopping Guarantee wherever you shop on the Internet. Shop in the comfort of your armchair, with thousands of great bargains just begging to be snapped up.

You'll find every major entertainment, sport and leisure topic at your fingertips at **www.virgin.net.** And as well as the huge range of material it brings you directly, if it's on the Internet, the search channel will help you find the information you're looking for, faster.

And that's not all. The Virgin Net software on the cover CD enables you to have FREE Internet access, five email addresses and Web space, as well as a direct link to the entertainment and leisure guide.

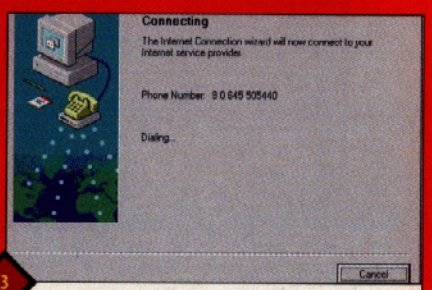
So what are you waiting for? Just stick the CD into your PC or Mac and within minutes you'll be enjoying the best of the Internet. For installation instructions, follow the step-by-step tutorial below.

Service Provider:	Virgin Net
Modem speeds:	56k (V.90, x2), ISDN
Tech support:	24 hour, call 0845 6500000
General enquiries:	0845 6500000
Web site:	www.virgin.net
Email addresses:	Five
Web Space:	10Mb
Platform:	Windows 3.x, 95, 98, MacOS
Cost:	Free

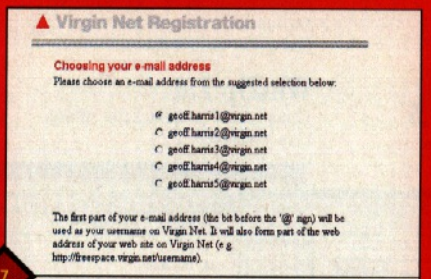
Installing Virgin Net

1 **Click on the 'Virgin Net' icon on our CD and you see this screen. You then choose to install a customised version of Internet Explorer, or update your existing copy.**

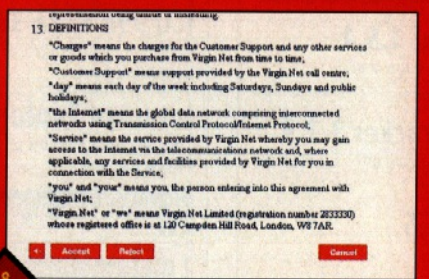
2 **Once the software installs, you have to restart your computer. Once done, you will see this screen inviting you to connect to the Virgin Net registration server.**



3 **If your modem is connected to your PC and phone line, you will hear it dialling the registration server. If there are any problems, check your dialler and modem settings.**

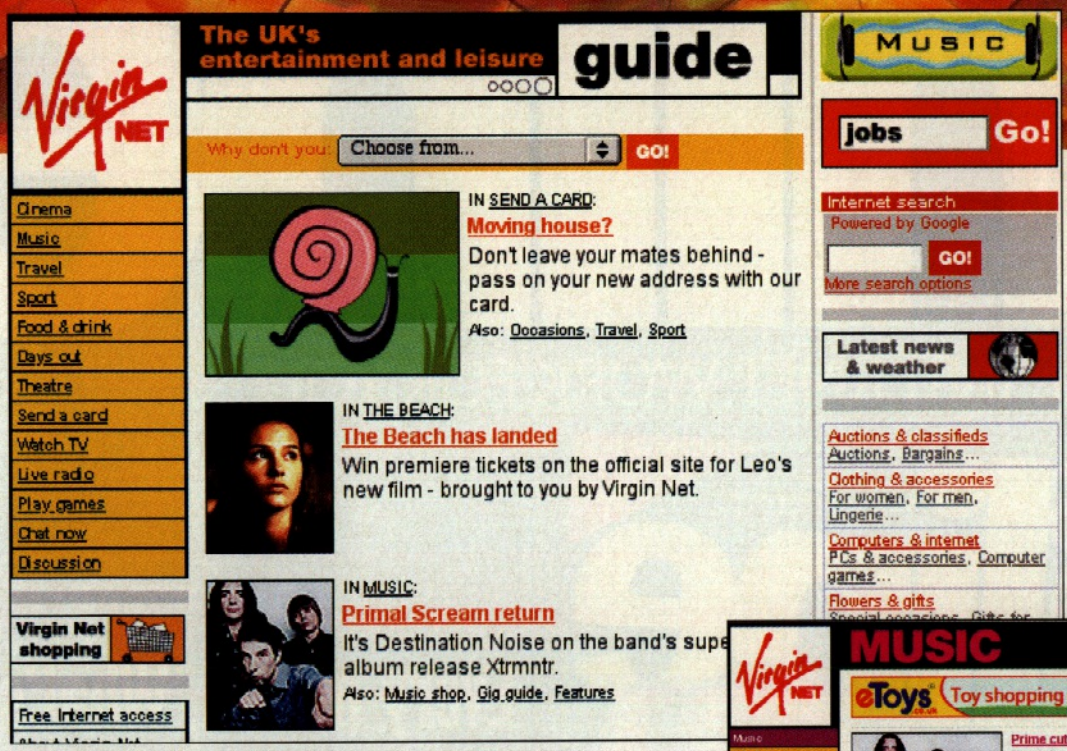


7 **Now it's time to choose your Virgin Net email address. Virgin Net suggests some addresses, or you can choose your own, as we have here. The more distinctive your choice of email address, the less chance there is that it's already been taken.**



8 **You are now asked to consent to the Virgin Net licence agreement and conditions of acceptable use. Unless you violently object to anything, click 'Accept.'**

9 **Almost there. Virgin Net confirms your account details, including your username, password and email address. Make a careful note of these details and keep it in a safe place – the password is particularly important. Click 'Next' to proceed.**

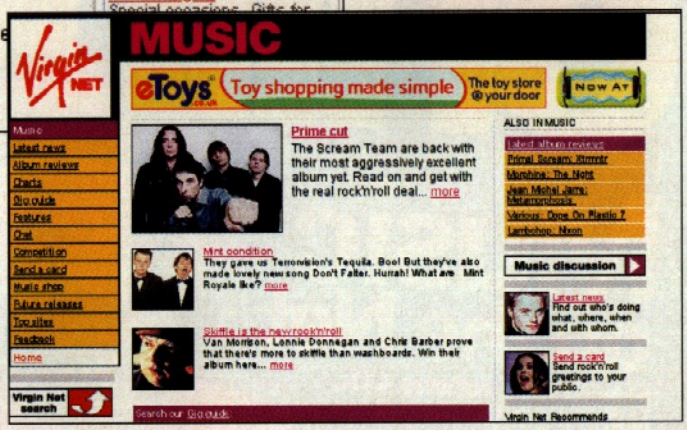


Whether it's entertainment, days out or travel, Virgin Net supplies excellent content

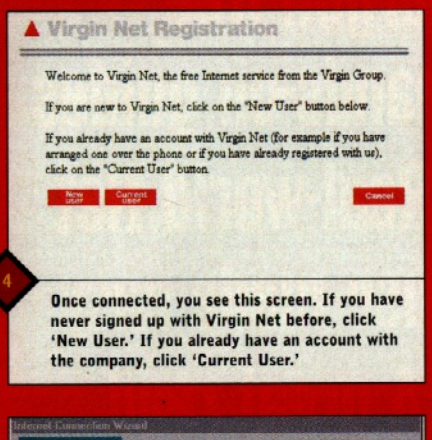
What you get with Virgin Net

(Windows and Mac)

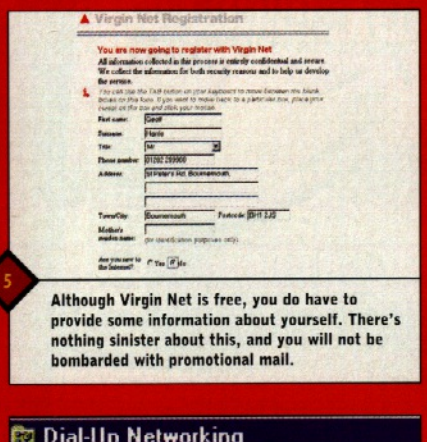
- ✔ Fast Internet connections (V.90 modems supported)
- ✔ Five email addresses
- ✔ 10Mb of free Web space
- ✔ Flexibly priced technical support – see the registration for details



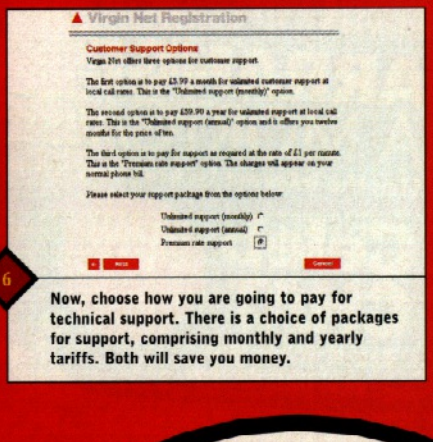
You'll find every major entertainment, sport and leisure topic at at Virgin Net. As well as the huge range of material, if it's on the Net, the search channel will find the information you're looking for



4 Once connected, you see this screen. If you have never signed up with Virgin Net before, click 'New User.' If you already have an account with the company, click 'Current User.'

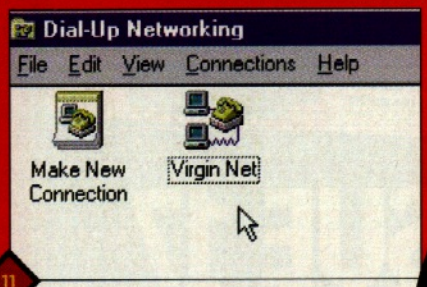


5 Although Virgin Net is free, you do have to provide some information about yourself. There's nothing sinister about this, and you will not be bombarded with promotional mail.



6 Now, choose how you are going to pay for technical support. There is a choice of packages for support, comprising monthly and yearly tariffs. Both will save you money.

10 Once you have confirmed your details, you see this screen. Click 'Explore Now' and you are asked to enter your Virgin Net password. Then, your Web browser opens and connects you to the Virgin Net Web site. You are now on the Internet.



11 You can connect to Virgin Net at any time by opening the icon in Dial-Up Networking (under 'My Computer') and hitting 'Connect.' This allows you to run any Internet software you want over your free Virgin Net connection.

Virgin NET

www.virgin.net

WHAT'S online

THE UK'S BEST INTERNET MAG

MAKING THE INTERNET WORK FOR YOU

Every month, What's Online helps you get much more from the Internet:

- **Jargon-free, hands-on guides**
- **Real-world Net use made easy**
- **A great read for all the family**

ISSUE 17 ON SALE NOW!

TO ORDER YOUR COPY OF WHAT'S ONLINE, CALL 01202 200200 OR EMAIL SUBS@PARAGON.CO.UK

Free for all!

There are so many free ISPs, we wanted to make sure you weren't missing out. So here's the definitive guide to the top providers. Let us know what you think of them

Over the last two years, a bewildering array of free service providers has sprung up and it seems more are arriving by the hour. So how do you choose between them? To give you a helping hand, we've listed the vital info to give you a better idea of what they offer.

Many of the free ISPs make their money by receiving a small percentage of the phone charges from BT, so it's in their interests to get you online quickly and keep you there. The cost of the tech support phone lines is a crucial factor if you're a newcomer to the Net, and prices range from the cost of a national call to a painful £1 a minute. Unless we've stated otherwise, the ISPs listed here offer access to the Internet at local call rates throughout the UK.

If you intend to use email regularly, it's a good idea to choose an ISP that provides POP3, rather than Web-based, mail. With POP3 mail you can collect and send your mail quickly and then log off the Net to read and reply offline. On the other hand, Web-based email is very useful if you need to be able to check your email from different PCs. If you can get both from your service provider – even better.

But although a provider may look good on paper, a crucial factor is how reliable and fast it is. After all, there's no point in having an unlimited amount of Web space and email addresses for every nickname you've ever had, if you're faced with engaged tones every time you try to connect. So once you've narrowed your selection down to a few that look good, try them out. Some ISPs allow online sign-up, which means you could have your account in a few minutes. And most of the ISPs will run happily alongside each other, so feel free to have a few in your Dial-up Networking box. You can use a program like AnySpeed to compare the ISPs' connections speeds. If you're paying good money for a traditional ISP, you could have one or two free ISPs as emergency backup. And if your free accounts prove reliable and fast, perhaps it's time to ditch that old paid-for service.

The free ISP business is moving so quickly that it can be hard to keep up, so learn from other Net users' by checking out the **alt.internet.providers.uk.free** newsgroup, which currently gets lots of postings a day. And if your free ISP doesn't carry this newsgroup, try another – it's a free lunch.

TOPTIP

If you want to know more about your free ISP, try using Neotrace (http://www.neoworx.com). You'll find out what backbone supplier it is using and the route that your Web requests take.

INFO

If you just can't get enough of free Internet service providers, there are a number of online resources that can help you find new providers. Try Net for Nowt at http://www.n4n.co.uk/.

THEY'RE FREE!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE...

116
4the Net
Aardvark
Abel
Arsenal
Barclays
bigwig
Breathe
breWorld
BT Click.com
CallNet
ConnectFree
contactbox
Currantbun.com
Dabsol
Egg
Freenetname
Free4All
Free for Life
Free Internet
Freeola

118
FreeNet
Free-Online
Freeserve
Freewire
FreeUK
FreeZone
In fin net
Internet Life
IXUK
LineOne
Localtel
Madasafish
Ministry of Sound
My ISP
NetDirect
Public Online
SoftNET FREE
Sniff Out
Tiny
Telinco

120
TescoNET
The Link
themail
themutual.net
Totalise
UK Fantastic
UK Online
Virgin Net
Webtribe
WH Smith
Xoom
X-Stream
Yahoo! Online

0800 ISPS 120
24/7 Freecall
CallNet 0800
Freedomi
Freecall UK
StrayDuck
SMI FreeNet

Free for all!

	Is there an initial set-up fee?	What modem protocols do you support?	How many email addresses do I get?	And what about newsgroups?	Do I get Web space?
4the Net www.4thenet.co.uk General enquires: 0870 740 1616	No	56K Flex, 64K and 128K ISDN, V.90, 28.8, 33.6 and 56k modems	There's a free email account	Free newsgroup access	You can bathe in unlimited Web space, so long as it's for personal use
ardvaak www.aardvaak.co.uk General enquires: No number	No	K56Flex, x2 and V.90, and ISDN at 64 and 128kbps	None. You'll have to take advantage of a Web-based email firm such as Hotmail (www.hotmail.com)	None of those either, unfortunately	You're out of luck – there's no space
Abel Gratis www.abelgratis.com General enquires: 0906 680 4444	No	K56, V.90, x2, ISDN64 and ISDN 128	UK's First Multi choice email domain address provider with unlimited addresses, all free	There's access to over 40,000 popular newsgroups	You receive a huge 50Mb of Web space for both home and business use, with your own host name
Arsenal www.arsenal.co.uk General enquires: 0171 704 2020	No	K56Flex and V.90 are supported, but not x2. There's also single user 64kbps ISDN	You can have up to five separate POP3 accounts	There are "loads of newsgroups," we're told	You get 5Mb of space, which you are free to use for business
Barclays www.barclays.co.uk General enquires: 0171 699 5000	No	K56Flex and V.90 are supported, but you're out of luck if you have an ISDN	Barclays gives you five email accounts with your service	You can access all the usual newsgroups	There's no Web space provided at the moment
bigwig www.bigwig.net General enquires: 0870 740 1033	No	K56Flex, x2 and V.90. Also ISDN at 64 and 128kbps	Seven POP3 accounts, each with up to 1,000 aliases, as well as IMAP email	There's access to about 25,000 newsgroups, and about five devoted to bigwig	You get 15Mb of space. Business use is allowed
breathe net www.breathe.co.uk/breathenet General enquires: 0800 500150	No	K56Flex and V.90, but not x2. There's also 64kbps ISDN	Five separate POP3 accounts	There's almost full Usenet access – only extreme newsgroups are censored	When you join breathe net, you get 10Mb of Web space available, but it's not for business use
BT Click.com www.btclickfree.com General enquires: 0800 731 7887	No	ClickFree supports K56Flex, but not x2 or V.90. There's also ISDN access at 64kbps	Unlimited. And both Web-based and POP3 mailboxes are now available	No, there's no news server	There's no Web space either
breworld www.breworld.net General enquires: 0181 565 4279	No	The service supports K56Flex and V.90 modems	breWorld supplies five email addresses with your account	You have access to the Web's newsgroups, as well as specialised beer groups	You get 5Mb of space, but this can only be used for non-commercial use
CallNet www.callnetuk.com General enquires: 0171 335 8300	No	K56Flex, x2 and V.90, and 128kbps ISDN	You get five email addresses	There's "full Usenet access"	You get 20Mb of space. Unfortunately, business use is not allowed
Connect Free www.connectfree.net General enquires: 0870 742 1111	No	K56Flex, x2 and V.90. And you can get connected at 64 and 128kbps using ISDN	Unlimited POP3 addresses	There's access to about 28,000	Yes, there's free Web space available
Contact Box www.contactbox.co.uk General enquires: 0870 740 4404	No	K56 Flex, X2, V.90, 64k and 128k ISDN	There's unlimited POP3 email addresses	There are over 30,000 newsgroups available	There's 25Mb of free Web space for personal or business use
Bun.com www.bun.com General enquires: 0845 306 3636	No	The ususal K56Flex and V.90 models	Bun.com customers can revel in unlimited email addresses	There are loads of them, too	Subscribers will get 25Mb of free Web space
Dabsol www.dabsol.co.uk General enquires: No number	No	x2, V.90 and ISDN at 64kbps are supported	Five password-protected POP3 accounts, and unlimited aliases	There are about 34,000, and eight or nine newsgroups specific to Dabsol	There's unlimited Web space which can be used for business
Egg www.egg.com General enquires: 0845 123 3233	No	56k, V.90, 56K Flex and 64K ISDN	There are five free email accounts on offer	You can access in excess of 25,000 newsgroups	Yes, there's 10Mb of free Web space included in the package
Freenetname http://www.freenetname.co.uk General enquires: 0800 376 6910	No	K56Flex and V.90	You get unlimited email addresses attached to your freenetname service or your free domain name	There's free access to all the usual newsgroups	You get 20Mb of Web space
Free4All www.free4all.co.uk General enquires: 01303 775500	No	x2 and V.90, but not K56Flex. And ISDN at 64 and 128kbps	Unlimited POP3 accounts	Users have access to about 45,000 newsgroups, and two devoted to Free4All	There's 10Mb up for grabs, which you can use for business
Free for Life www.freeforlife.co.uk General enquires: 01908 378 999	Yes, there's a £30 charge for the CD and administration	K56Flex and x2 are supported. You can also use the speedy 128kbps ISDN	None	There's no news server	You're out of luck. There's no Web space either
The Free Internet www.thefreeinternet.net General enquires: No number	No	K56, V90, ISDN	You get free unlimited email addresses	Yes, there's newsgroup access	Just 5Mb on offer here
Freeola http://freeola.com General enquires: 01279 321 321	No	ISDN up to 128, V.90	As many as you want and you get to chose from over 750 domain names	Full newsgroup coverage	There's 25Mb of space using your favourite email address as the URL

If I get stuck, who do I call?	Can I get help by email or looking at your Web site?	Is there Mac technical support?	If I don't use my account, will it be disconnected?	How do I get my account?	Can I sign up at your Web site?	Do you require caller line identification?
The helpdesk is open 24-hours a day. Phone 0906 960 4343. Calls are charged at £1 a minute	There's no online help, but you can email queries to admin@4thenet.co.uk	There are plans for Mac support	You won't be disconnected	You will soon be able to get the software via floppy disc or CD	Yes	No
There's no number for tech support – this is strictly a service for people who know what they're doing	There's no email help. The Web page contains details on how to set up Dial-up Networking connection	Again, there's no technical support	Yes, after 30 days	Sign up at the Web page	Yes	Yes
The tech support line (0906 680 4444)	You can get help by email and from the Web address or by phone	Yes you can, and Abel also provide Amiga software	Yes, after three months	All you have to do is phone 0906 680 4444 for the software	Yes	No, you don't need it
The tech line (0906 553 5209) is open 9am to 10pm, seven days a week. Calls cost 50p per minute	You can get email help – you should get a next day reply. There are FAQs on the Web page	The CD doesn't contain Mac software, but the tech support line can assist you	Yes, after 60 days	You can get the Arsenal CD by phoning 0171 704 2020, or by popping into the Gunners' shop.	Yes	Yes
There are plans for technical support, but as yet, the number is unavailable.	There will be support available online	Mac users will have to wait a little while	No	To get an account, you can phone 0800 494949 to be sent an installation CD	Yes	No
Dial 0906 960 2415. It's open 24-hours a day, seven days a week. Calls costs £1 per minute	Email support takes 24 hours, or up to 2.5 days for complex queries. The site also contains info	You can access Mac software from the CD, and the tech support team provides support for Macs	Yes, after 90 days	Get the CD by ringing 0870 740 1033. The CD contains IE 4.01, Netscape 4, and some Mac software	Yes	Yes
Call 09067 112209. It's open 24-hours, seven days a week. Calls cost 50p a minute	Yes, there's email help with a 24-hour response time. The Web page contains tutorials	Mac software should be available and tech support will be able to help with any Mac problems	Yes, after 30 days, but this policy is not strictly enforced	Ring 0800 783 7439 or go to the site. The CD contains IE 4, Outlook Express and a Net guide	No, you need the CD	No
Call 0906 302 0240, open from 8 am to midnight, seven days a week. Calls charged at 50p per minute	The Web site has an FAQ list and you can email for help	Yes, you can – once the Mac software is available, which should be this month	No	Download the ClickFree software from the Web site or call 0800 731 7887 for a CD	Yes	Yes
You will get free technical support, the details of which you'll get when you sign up	Yes, if you email info@breworld.net but there's no help at the Web site	No, Mac users are out of luck	No	Buy Taste magazine, pick up CDs from selected Old Speckled Hen outlets, or apply for a CD at the site	No, you need the CD	No
The number is 0906 690 3300, 24-hours, seven days a week. Calls are charged at national rate	There's email help. CallNet aims to reply the same day. The Web site contains some details	Yes	No	To get the CD visit the Web site or give the tech support number a ring. The CD contains IE 4	Yes	No
The 0890 900 0050 number is open 24-hours, seven days a week. The calls are 50p per minute	Yes, there's email help. You can also find helpful information for PCs and Macs on the Web page	Yes, you can	No	There's no CD available, so just go to the Web page and sign up	Yes	Yes
You can call technical support on 0906 960 5958. Calls are charged at £1 per minute	There is a comprehensive Help section. Support is available via support@contactbox.co.uk	Yes, there's also a Mac help section on the Web site	You don't get disconnected, but your free number is subject to a minimum usage of 19 mins per month	You can request a CD by phoning 0870 740 4404	Yes	Yes
0845 660171 for an automated service at local rates. 0900 9191928 for a person at 50p per minute	You can get help from the site. You can also email for help	Yes, there's Mac support	No	Call 0845 306 3636 to be sent the CD	No, you need the CD	No
0890 994 0000 (7am to midnight) 49p per minute from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, 39p other times	You'll get an email reply within three days. The site has details on set ups for PCs and Macs and email	There's no over-the-phone help	Yes, after 30 days	There should be a CD by the time you read this, or just sign up at the Web page	Yes	Yes
You can call the technical support line on 0900 290 9114. Calls are charged at 50p per minute	Yes, email support is available, and there's a FAQ section on the Web site	Mac users can be guided through the registration process by calling 0171 670 1173	Yes, after 30 days	You can call Egg and register for a free CD. The number is 0845 123 3233	Yes	No
Freephone 0800 376 6920 24-hours a day, 365 days a year	Yes to both	Yes you can	Only if it's not used for more than 90 days	You can sign up online or call 0800 376 6910 to order a CD	Yes and you can also register your free domain name online	Yes
Call 0845 301 1670, 8am to 12 midnight, seven days a week. It's a local rate number	You can get email help. The Web page contains info for dial-up connections, Mac info and FAQs	Yes, there is support	No	Sign up online or phone 01303 775500	Yes, visit www.free4all.co.uk	No
Support can be reached on 01908 377707, 9am to 9pm. Calls are charged at national call rates	Yes, you should get an email reply within 24-hours.	Yes, they have Macs at tech support	There's no definite policy	Ring the sales team on 01908 378 999 for the CD or order over the Web site.	Yes	Yes
Phone 0845 0800 836. Calls charged at local rate	Technical support is available through both email and the Web site	Basic Mac technical support is available	No	Sign up online or call 0208 636 7377 for a CD	Yes	No
You can phone support on 0845 301 1671	You can get help from the Web site or from support@freeola.co.uk	Yes	Yes, after three months	Ring 01279 321321 for a CD	Yes	No

Free for all!

	Is there an initial set-up fee?	What modem protocols do you support?	How many email addresses do I get?	And what about newsgroups?	Do I get Web space?
FreeNet www.freenet.co.uk General enquires: Ring tech support	No	K56Flex, x2 and V.90. And there's 64 and 128kbps ISDN	Unlimited POP3 mail accounts	There's access to around 30-35,000 newsgroups	You get 25Mb for personal or business use
Free-Online www.free-online.net General enquires: 0870 7060 504	No	x2 and V.90, but not K56Flex. You can also use ISDN at 64kbps	Unlimited POP3 accounts	32,000, but there are plans to expand this to 56-57,000. Five newsgroups devoted to Free-Online	Unlimited space – you get a 100Mb chunk at first, but when you fill it up, you can get another chunk
Freeserve www.freeserve.co.uk General enquires: 0990 500049	No	Freeserve supports V.90. K56Flex and x2 modems will get 33kbps. Customers can use ISDN at 128kbps	Unlimited POP3 email addresses	There's access to about 31,000 newsgroups. There are about 19 devoted to Freeserve	There's 15Mb of space to be had. Business use is allowed
FreeUK www.freeuk.com General enquires: 0845 3555 555	No	Only V.90 is supported, so you'll be connecting at a maximum of 33.6k. There's also 64kbps ISDN access	Unlimited POP3 addresses	There's access to about 37,000, and there are four devoted to FreeUK	There's 25Mb of Web space. Business use is allowed
Freewire www.freewire.net General enquires: No number	No	Anything up to V.90 is supported	You will recieve unlimited email accounts	Currently there are around 40,000 newsgroups for you to enjoy	There's a whopping 50Mb of Web space available to you
FreeZone www.freezone.co.uk General enquires: 0870 744 1111	No	K56Flex, x2 and V.90. And ISDN at 64 and 128kbps	Unlimited POP3 mail	There's access to over 30,000 newsgroups. There are none specific to FreeZone	You get 20Mb of space. Business use is allowed
in fin net www.infinnet.co.uk General enquires: No number	No	K56Flex, x2 and V.90	Unlimited email addresses with five mailboxes per address	There's access to over 30,000 newsgroups.	You get 20Mb of Web space
Internet Lite www.cwc.net General enquires: 0800 092 3013	No	K56Flex, x2 and V.90. For serious speed freaks, there's ISDN access at 128kbps	You get five email addresses	There's access to about 20,000, including three specific to Internet Lite	There's 20Mb free space for you to be creative in
IXUK www.ixuk.com General enquires: No number	No	9600kps right up to 56K (V.90). 64k and 128K ISDN lines are also supported	You get unlimited addresses on a single POP3 email account	There's access to newsgroups	There's 20Mb for you to play around with
LineOne www.lineone.net General enquires: 0800 111210	No	K56Flex and V.90 are supported,as well as x2. ISDN are also supported	You are allowed anything up to five email addresses	LineOne users have full access to newsgroups	You get 10Mb of Web space
The Link www.thelink.co.uk General enquires: No number	No	n/a	No	No	No
Localtel www.localtel.co.uk General enquires: 0800 376 5261	No	K56Flex and V.90	Unlimited POP3 addresses	There should be newsgroups, but the exact number still has to be finalised	There will be 20Mb of Web space, but it won't be available for business use
Madasafish www.madasafish.com General enquires: 0800 0273 373	No	Up to V.90 and ISDN	You can enjoy unlimited email addresses	Yes, there are newsgroups available – the number currently stands at 35,000	For all you home page enthusiasts out there, you can enjoy an unlimited amount of Web space
Ministry of Sound www.ministryofsound.co.uk General enquires: No number	No	K56Flex and V.90 are supported	You can enjoy unlimited email addresses, each with the domain name of ministryofsound.net	There are no specific newsgroups	Customers will receive 20Mb of Web space for personal use
themutual.net www.themutual.net General enquires: No number	No	K56 Flex, V.90 and 64K ISDN	You get five POP3 email accounts	Yes, there's access to newsgroups but it is "outsourced"	You get 25Mb of Web space to exploit
My ISP www.my-isp.co.uk General enquires: No number	No	K56, V.90 and ISDN	You get unlimited email addresses	Yes, you get newsgroup access	There's 20Mb to go at
NetDirect OnLine www.netdirect-online.co.uk General enquires: 0800 731 3311	No	K56Flex , x2, V.90 and up to 128Kbps	You get unlimited amount of email addresses, and you also get a sub-domain	There's no news server at the present	Customers will receive 20Mb of Web space
Netscape Online www.netscapeonline.co.uk General enquires: 0901 900 9000	No	V.90, x2 and ISDN (V120)	Unlimited POP3 email addresses	27,000 Newsgroups are provided.	You get 20Mb.
SoftNET FREE www.softnetfree.co.uk General enquires: 0800 035 5355	No	K56Flex and V.90, but not x2. There's ISDN access at 64k	An unlimited number of POP3 addresses	There's access to over 32,000 newsgroups, and there are two specifically for SoftNET FREE	There's 10Mb to play with. Business use is allowed
Sniff Out www.sniffout.net General enquires: 01883 742510	No	All current modem protocols. 64K and 128K ISDN are also supported	You can have unlimited email addresses with an option to have different passwords for each	There's currently access to over 55,000 newsgroups	You get 20Mb of Web space with automated page preperation facility available, if required

If I get stuck, who do I call?	Can I get help by email or looking at your Web site?	Is there Mac technical support?	If I don't use my account, will it be disconnected?	How do I get my account?	Can I sign up at your Web site?	Do you require caller line identification?
08700 722622. National call rates. Lines open 9am to 6pm Mon to Sat and 10am to 5.30pm on Sun	Yes, there's help via email. The Web page contains details of settings and a DUN walkthrough	There's no specific technical support for Macs. It is coming soon	No	There's no CD, so sign up at the Web page	Yes	No
Call 0890 998 8776 between 7am-midnight. It costs 39p/minute off peak, 49p/minute peak	There's email help – you should get a reply in 24 hours. The Web page contains info	There's a page on the Web site telling you how to get online with a Mac	Yes, after 30 days	Ring 0870 706 0504 for a CD containing the software	Yes	Yes
Call 0839 517517, open 24-hours, seven days a week. Calls cost 50p per minute	There are nine different email addresses, each covering a specific type of problem.	No	After 30 days the account is suspended, but the user has 10 days to reactivate their account	The CD can be picked up from Dixons, Currys, PC World and The Link.	No, you have to use the CD	Yes
Telephone support is at **0845 3555 555**, open 24-hours, seven days a week	Email help is available and the site contains details on setting ups, using FTP, and a guide to DUN	There's a Mac set-up wizard on the Web page, and FreeUK will try to help with Mac connections	Yes, after 90 days	There's no CD, so go to the Web page and sign up	Yes	Yes
If you are having problems, you can contact the technical support staff on 0906 716 0550	Yes, you can get free email help	Unfortunately, there's no support for Mac users, although the service is available to Mac users	You won't be disconnected	If you want an account, you sign up at the Web site – http://www.freewire.net	Yes	No, but may change
The tech support number is 0906 300 1111, open 9am to 10pm. It costs 50p per minute	No email help and the site was very basic. As the service is so new, this could well change	Freezone intends to provide info on its Web pages	You won't be disconnected	Ring 0870 744 1111 for a CD containing IE 4.01	Yes	No
Telephone support will soon be available	Yes, there's a support section on the Web site as well as details of the email support	Not at the moment, but there are plans to introduce Mac support soon	Yes, after 30 days	You sign up online. Visit the in fin net Web site at http://www.infinnet.co.uk	Yes you can. Simply phone 0845 301 1504 to get all the details for setting up Dial-up Networking	No
Call tech support on 0870 908 8891. It's open 24-hours, calls are charged at the national call rate	No conventional email support, but if you email, you receive an email saying that they will phone you	No	No	Ring 0800 092 3013 for the CD	No	No
You can contact the tech support desk on 0906 690 3315. Calls are charged at 50p a minute	Yes there is thorough online support available, that should answer any of your questions	Unfortunately, there's no specialised Mac support	No	You don't have to worry about getting a CD, the only way to set up an account is online	Yes	No
The tech support line (0906 302 0100) is open around the clock. It will cost you 50p per minute	Yes, you can benefit from email support. Send your queries to support@lineone.net	Yes, you can get Macintosh support	No	Get the connectivity software by calling 0800 111 210	Yes	No
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	Take a trip along to The Link's Web site	Yes, you can	n/a
Call the support number, open 8am to 9pm Monday to Friday, and 10am to 6pm over the weekend	Significant help is planned	There will only really be help to get connected	No	Ring 0800 376 5261 to get the CD	No, the only way that you can connect is by getting hold of the CD	No
You can phone technical support on 01851 777727. Calls are charged at national rates	Yes, email and Web site support is available	Yes, there is Mac support	Yes, after six months	If you'd like to phone for a CD to join the service, call 0800 0273 373	Yes	Yes
Call 0906 676 7678. It will cost you 50p a minute	Yes, there is email support available	Yes, there is Mac support available on the Web pages	You won't be disconnected	If you want to sign up you will need a copy of the Ministry magazine. This comes with a CD-ROM	No, the only way is by using the CD	No
Ring 0906 300 3366 between 8am and 9.30pm. It costs 75p per minute though	All emails will be answered within 48 hours. There's also plenty of help available on the Web site	There is currently limited Mac technical support, but this will improve	No	Go to the Web site and follow the instructions	Yes	No
Give the techies a buzz on 0906 671 0020. Calls cost 50p per minute	Yes. If you get stuck, send an email to support@myisp.plc.uk	n/a	n/a	Go to the My ISP Web site and you're half way there	Yes	n/a
There's 24 hour technical support available. The number is 0870 166 5555 charged at National Rate	There is email support and help on the Web site. Go to http://www.support.netdirect-online.co.uk	Yes, there is Mac support available on the Web pages	Yes, after 90 days	Yes, go to www.instant.ndo.com	Yes	Yes
Call 0901 900 9000. It's open 24 hours every day. Calls cost 50p/minute	Tech support is offered online through Netscape Online's Web site.	No	Yes, after 60 days.	Order the CD	No	Yes
Call 0890 120 4000, open 8am to 8pm and 9am to 5pm over the weekend, cost 60p per minute	There's email help which aims to reply in a couple of hours. The sitee contains FAQs and a glossary	No, you're out of luck	Yes, after 30 days	Get hold of the CD via the Web site, or by ringing 0870 727444. The CD contains IE 4	Yes	Yes
The tech support line (01883 742510) is open 24/7 Calls are charged at normal national rate	There is full email support at support@sniffout.co.uk. The site also has illustrated help pages	Technical support for Macs is provided	No	Telephone 01883 742510 or email support@sniffout.co.uk for a CD-ROM	Yes	No

Free for all!

	Is there an initial set-up fee?	What modem protocols do you support?	How many email addresses do I get?	And what about newsgroups?	Do I get Web space?
Tiny www.tinyonline.net General enquires: 0800 821333	No	Up to V.90, ISDN at 64K.	There are five separate email addresses	There are over 25,000 newsgroups available	There's 15Mb of Web space supplied for you to do what you will with it
Telinco www.telinco.co.uk General enquires: 0800 542 0800	No	K56Flex, x2 and V.90. There's also 128kbps ISDN access	There's an unlimited number of POP3 aliases to be had	Telinco provides access to the most frequently used groups	You get 5Mb of Web space. If you want to use it for business, that's OK
TescoNet www.tesco.net General enquires: 0345 225533	No	K56Flex, but not x2. TescoNet was aiming to have V.90. There's also ISDN at 64kbps	Five POP3 accounts	There's access to 30,000 newsgroups, but no newsgroups especially for TescoNet users	There's 10Mb of free Web space, which can be used for business
themail www.themail.co.uk General enquires: 01424 830 907	No	K56Flex, x2 and V.90. And there's ISDN access at 64kbps	One POP3 account. You may receive advertisements in your email	It doesn't have own news server. It provides pointers to the free news servers on the Web	There's 30Mb of space available
Totalise www.totalise.net General enquires: 0800 542 7566	No	K56, V90, 128K ISDN and BT Home Highway	You get unlimited Web-based and POP3 email addresses	Newsgroup access comes as part of the service	You can have up to 50Mb of free Web space
UK Fantastic www.ukfantastic.net General enquires: 0702 1104458	No	K56Flex, x2 and V.90 are supported. You can also use 128kbps ISDN	Unlimited POP3 addresses	About 18,000	There is 5Mb on offer, and there are plans to offer unlimited space. You can use it for business
UK Online www.ukonline.co.uk General enquires: No number	No	K56Flex and V.90 are supported, as well as single and dual ISDN	Unlimited email addresses	UK Online only carry newsgroups that are not illegal or that carry pornograhic content	You will get unlimited Web space with your account
Virgin Net www.virgin.net General enquires: 0845 650 0000	No	56Kbps, x2 and V.90	You get five email addresses	No newsgroups, only chat areas and noticeboards	You get 10Mb of Web space
Webtribe www.webtribe.net General enquires: See Web site	No	V.90, K56 Flex and most protocols below 33.6. Single and dual channel ISDN are also supported	There's one email address, but no limit on additional mailboxes	There's access to a full news feed.	Yes, you get 10Mb Web space, and an address of http://www.webtribe.net/first letterofusername/username
WH Smith www.whsmith.co.uk General enquires: 0171 409 3222	No	K56Flex but not V.90 or x2. there's also ISDN access at 64kbps	Unlimited, and both Web-based and POP3 mailboxes are available	There's no news server	There's no Web space, either
Xoom www.xoom.net General enquires: 01483 417633	No	K56Flex. Others are currently being added	Unlimited. Currently it's Web-based email, but POP3 should be available in the near future	There's Web-based news service available, but there's no separate news server at this time	There's unlimited free Web space, for personal and commercial use. There's also free software
X-Stream www.x-stream.com General enquires: 0800 358 5678	No	K56 Flex and V.90, but not x2 or ISDN	You get one POP3 email account	There's no news server, and no newsgroups dealing specifically with the X-Stream Network	There's 20Mb of Web space on offer with the X-Stream Network. It can be used for business if you want
Yahoo! Online www.yahoo.co.uk General enquires: No number	No	K56 Flex	You have unlimited addresses and use the Yahoo! Mail service	There's no news server	15Mb of space from Geocities

0800 ISPs

Freephone Net access is here! Check out who's offering what

	Is there an initial set-up fee?	What modem protocols do you support?	How many email addresses do I get?	And what about newsgroups?	Do I get Web space?
24/7 Freecall www.24-7freecall.co.uk General enquires: No number	No, but there's a £24.70 monthly subscription fee. Or sign up for a year for £247	K56 Flex, V.90, X2, 64K and 128K ISDN	Subscribers get five POP3 email accounts	Yes, there's newsgroup access	Sure do. There's 10Mb to utilise
CallNet 0800 www.callnet0800.co.uk General enquires: 0800 058 0800	No	K56 Flex, V.90, X2	You get five POP3 email accounts	You get access to approximately 40,000 newsgroups	There's 20Mb to play with
Freedomi www.freedomi.co.uk General enquires: No number	No	56K, V.90, 64K ISDN	You get five POP3 email accounts	You get access to "all the usual newsgroups" as well as some specific to Freedomi	There's 15Mb for you
Freecall UK www.freecall-uk.co.uk General enquires: No number	There's a £6 one-off charge	K56 Flex, V90, 64/128K ISDN	You get five POP3 email accounts	Yes, you get newsgroup access	Yes, there's free Web space
Strayduck www.strayduck.com General enquires: 0845 660 9000	No	K56 Flex, X2, V.90, 128K ISDN	You get one POP3 email account and unlimited addresses	You get access to about 25,000 newsgroups	There's a whopping 25Mb of Web space to fill up
SMI FreeNet www.smi-group.co.uk General enquires: No number	No	K56, V.90, ISDN	n/a	n/a	You get unlimited Web space

If I get stuck, who do I call?	Can I get help by email or looking at your Web site?	Is there Mac technical support?	If I don't use my account, will it be disconnected?	How do I get my account?	Can I sign up at your Web site?	Do you require caller line identification?
Pre-installed customers call 02193 821222. Other customers call 0900 290 9103 (50p a minute)	Yes, there are FAQs on the Web site	A Mac CD will be available soon	Yes, after 30 days	Request a CD online or from a Tiny showroom. Software is also pre-installed on new Tiny PCs.	Yes	Yes
Call 0906 960 0960. It's open 8am to 9pm, and will set you back £1 per minute	Yes, there is email support and help on the Web page	Yes, you can get support	Yes, after 90 days	Get the CD by ringing 0800 542 0800	Yes	No
Call 0906 8020 111. It's open from 8am to midnight. Calls cost 50p per minute	Yes, there's email help. The Web site contains info about managing your account	Yes, TescoNet supports Macs	Yes, after 30 days	Get a CD from Tesco or ring 0345 225533.	Yes, all the details you need are online, but you must have a Tesco Clubcard	Yes
There was no telephone support at the time of writing, but it was planned for March	Yes, email help should reply the same day. The Web page some help	The site contains info on how to get connected	Yes, after 60 days	A CD should be available in March, or you can sign up on the Web page	Yes	No
Call 0800 542 7566 - for free!	Yes. Send an email to support@totalise.net. There's also help on the Web site	Yes, there's full Mac support	No, not currently	By registering at www.totalise.net	Yes	No, not at the moment
Call 0906 960 2472, open 24-hours, seven days a week. The calls cost £1 per minute	You should get an email reply in a couple of hours. The site contains set ups for Windows 95/98 and Macs	There's telephone support to get you online	Yes, after 60 days, but this policy is not yet being enforced	There's no CD, so just go to the Web site	Yes you can, but you'd need to ring up for the settings	Yes
You can either opt to pay £4.70 a month for unlimited tech support or pay 25p a minute	Email help is available on support@ukonline.co.uk	Yes	Accounts always remain on the database	You can contact UK Online from the Web site	Yes	No
Call 0845 650 0000 24hrs (£1 per minute) or you can pay £5.99 a month for a local call rate subscription	The site has solutions for common problems or email for help by contacting support@virgin.net	Yes	You won't get disconnected	Go to the Virgin Net Web site (http://www.virgin.net) and register online or phone 0500 558800	Yes	Yes
There's no technical support by phone	Yes, tech support is done via email. Any good questions received will also be put on the site	Instructions are currently being written	Under discussion	You can request a CD from the site	Yes	No
The help desk number is 0906 302 0240 and is open from 8am to midnight (50p a minute)	Yes	Once the Mac software is available	You won't get disconnected	You can buy a disk for 50p. Proceeds go to fund the company's community work in the field of literacy	Yes	Yes
Phone on the normal number, which is not premium rate	Yes	No	You won't get disconnected	Visit the Web site at http://www.xoom.net and follow the instructions	Yes	Yes
The number's 0900 901 1000, open 24-hours, seven days a week. Calls cost 50p per minute	Yes, you should get a reply within 24 hours. The Web page contains FAQs and info on configuring software	No	You won't get disconnected	The X-Stream Network provides a CD. Get it by ringing 0870 730 6466. You can also sign up online	Yes, you can download the X-Stream software from the Web site	No
Call between 8am and midnight seven days a week, the number is 0906 302 1200 (50p per min)	Yes, there are a series a frequently asked questions on the site	No	You won't get disconnected	Sign up online or by getting a CD from HMV and Waterstones	Yes	Yes

If I get stuck, who do I call?	Can I get help by email or looking at your Web site?	Is there Mac technical support?	If I don't use my account, will it be disconnected?	How do I get my account?	Can I sign up at your Web site?	Do you require caller line identification?
The service is yet to launch, but you will get your first five technical support calls free	Yes, you will be able to	n/a	n/a	Go to 24-7Freecall's Web site. Or pick up a CD	Yes	n/a
Call 0906 100 1604. It costs 50p per minute	There's email support at support@callnet0800.com	Yes	Yes, after a certain amount of time has elapsed	Ring 0800 058 0800 or go to CallNet's Web site at www.callnet0800.com	Yes	Yes
The ISP hasn't launched yet, but tech support will be 24/7	Yes	It will be PC-only at first but Mac support is planned	Accounts that are unused for two months will be cancelled	You can pre-register on the Freedomi Web site	Yes	No
You can call tech support on 0901 0204 999. Calls cost 25p per minute	Email help is available from support@ freecall-uk.co.uk	n/a	n/a	Go to the Web site and follow the instructions	Yes you can	n/a
Ring 0906 916 900. Calls charged at local rate	Email ducksupport@ strayduck.com. There is also a technical support page on the Web site	No	No	Sing up online or get a CD by calling 0845 542 5454	Yes, you can indeed	Yes
The service is yet to launch, so there's no number yet	n/a	n/a	n/a	For the latest information, go to the Web site	n/a	n/a

Glossary: complete &

PRACTICAL INTERNET takes the techno-babble out of the Net and turns it

ActiveX
Microsoft's programming language that downloads and runs programs on your computer's own hard drive. ActiveX technology is used with Microsoft Internet Explorer to make interactive Web pages that look and behave like computer programs, rather than static pages. With ActiveX, users can ask or answer questions, use push buttons, and interact in many other ways with the Web page.

Anchor
In HyperText Markup Language (HTML), an anchor is the establishing of a term, phrase, image, or other information object.

Applet
A small Java program that can be embedded in an HTML page.

Attachment
A file which is included along with an email message.

Backbone
A backbone is a larger transmission line that carries data which is gathered from smaller lines that interconnect with it.

Bandwidth
This refers to the amount of data that can be sent through a given communications circuit in a given amount of time. In general, greater bandwidth means a faster transfer of data from one point to another on the Internet.

BBS
This stands for Bulletin Board System, which is a computerised meeting and announcement system. It allows people to carry on discussions, upload and download files, and make announcements without the people being connected to the computer at the same time.

Bookmarks
The name given to Web sites which are 'marked' for future reference in Netscape Navigator. Also known as 'Favorites' in Internet Explorer.

Boolean
The term 'boolean,' often encountered when doing searches on the Web, refers to a system of logical thought developed by the English mathematician and computer pioneer, George Boole (1815-64). In boolean searching, an 'and' operator between two words or other values (for example, 'pear AND apple') means one is searching for documents containing both of the words or values, not just one of them. An 'or' operator between two words or other values (for example, 'pear OR apple') means one is searching for documents containing either of the words.

Client/Server
Client/Server describes the relationship between two computer programs in which one program, the client, makes a service request ftrom another program, the server.

Cookie
Data that a Web server gives to a browser the first time the user visits the site. This is then updated with each return visit. The server saves the information the cookie contains about the user. The user's browser does the same – as a text file stored in the Netscape or Explorer system folder.

CU-SeeMe
CU-SeeMe is a product for Internet videoconferencing. Each user installs the CU-SeeMe software, allowing them to have person-to-person or group discussions. Users with a small attached video camera (optional) can transmit their picture to other users in a conference.

Disk cache
A disk cache is a mechanism for improving the time it takes to read from or write to a hard disk. The disk cache holds data that has recently been read and, in some cases, adjacent data areas that are likely to be accessed next.

DNS
Domain Name Server or Domain Name System. This converts an address such as **http://www.paragon.co.uk** into an IP (Internet Protocol) number, such as 194.72.242.3.

Dynamic HTML
Dynamic HTML is a collective term for a combination of new HyperText Markup Language (HTML) tags and options, style sheets, and programming that will let you create Web pages that are more animated and responsive to user interaction than previous versions of HTML. Dynamic HTML can allow Web documents to look and act like desktop applications or multimedia productions.

Flame
Abusive messages which are sent by email or posted to a newsgroup in response to daft comments.

FTP
File Transfer Protocol. The method which is usually used for transferring files across the Internet. There are separate FTP programs available, although much of it is now done over the Web.

GIF
Graphics Interchange Format. A format for saving images so they can be 'seen' by a Web browser. GIF was developed in 1987 by giant US service provider CompuServe.

Gopher
Gopher is an Internet application protocol in which file structures that are organised according to hierarchy, are maintained on servers that are also part of an overall information structure. Gopher provided a way to bring text files from all over the world to a viewer on your computer.

Host
A computer on a network, sometimes referring to computers that offer services to other computers, such as running a Web service or database.

HTML
HyperText Markup Language. The universal language of the Web in which all pages are written. Official versions of HTML are defined by the W3 Consortium, which is at **http://www.w3.org**.

HTTP
HyperText Transfer Protocol. This is the protocol that's used to carry traffic between a Web browser's computer and the Web site.

Imagemap
In Web page development, an imagemap is a graphic image that is defined so a user can click on different areas of the image and be linked to different destinations. You make an imagemap by defining each of the sensitive areas in terms of their X and Y coordinates. With each set of coordinates, you specify a URL or Web address that will be linked to when the user clicks on that area. Imagemaps are used widely on many Web sites as a more adventuresome form of main menu.

Intelligent Agent
A software routine that uses 'intelligence' to do an assigned task. For example, searching through the Web for pages that match your personal tastes.

Intranet
A (usually) private network which is only accessible by authorised users. For example, a company could connect its Bristol, London and Birmingham offices with its own private intranet.

IRC
Internet Relay Chat. A multi-user chat system. This is a feature of the Net which allows you to hold 'live' text conversations with other people on the same 'channel.'

ISDN
Integrated Services Digital Network. This is a digital alternative to current analogue phone lines. ISDN modems are already available, enabling its users to achieve much faster connection speeds.

ISP
Internet service provider. A company which sells connections to the Net. Compare with online service providers (OSPs) which provide an Internet connection in addition to their own exclusive members-only services such as chat forums, news services, and other assorted information.

Java
A programming language developed by Sun Microsystems that enables a programmer to include multimedia effects and increased interactivity within Web pages.

JPEG
Joint Photographic Experts Group. JPEG is another file format that can be viewed on the Web. The image is compressed, thus reducing the file size, for faster loading.

Kbps
Kilobits per second. This represents your modem speed; higher is better.

Leased line
A permanent phone line between two points on the Internet.

Links
A link, or hyperlink, acts as a bridge between separate Web pages. By clicking on a link you are taken to another Web page.

Mailing list
A list of people subscribed to a periodic electronic mailing (email) distribution on a particular topic. On the Net, as you'd expect, mailing lists include each subscriber's email address rather than postal ones.

Markup
Markup refers to the sequence of characters or other symbols that you insert at certain places in a text or word processing file to indicate how the file should look when it is printed or displayed or to describe the document's logical structure.

explained

easy-to-understand English!

INFO

Although we've done our best to explain the most common Net terminology, you're bound to come across ones not covered here. If this happens, a useful place to go is the Internet Language Dictionary at www.netlingo.com which gives full A-Z listings of all the terms.

MHz
MegaHertz. The speed at which your computer's processor works. For example, 333MHz or 450MHz. This doesn't affect Net connection speed, alas.

Modem
Modulator/demodulator. A piece of equipment that connects computers to each other for sending communications via telephone lines. The modem converts the digital data of computers into analogue signals to send over the telephone lines, then changes it back into digital signals to be read by the computer on the other end. Modems are used for sending and receiving electronic mail, and also for surfing the Net.

MPEG
MPEG, or Motion Picture Experts Group, develops standards for digital video and digital audio compression. In Internet terms, you can download MPEG or MP3 files for near-CD quality audio.

Newsgroups
Discussion groups which are held over the Net. Also known as Usenet.

Newsreader
The software that enables you to read messages (or 'postings') that people have sent to newsgroups. Built into the popular Web browsers.

News server
The hardware that holds all the newsgroups you can access, usually based at your Internet service provider. If you've used DejaNews or HotBot to find the name of a newsgroup but can't find it when you look through your news server's list of available groups, you may be able to find it on a 'public access' server.

Offline
When your computer is not connected to the Internet.

Offline Browser
Software which downloads the content of Web pages onto your hard drive, so whole sites can then be viewed 'offline' at your convenience.

Online Service Provider (OSP)
A company which offers Internet access combined with its own interface and 'members-only' services, such as live chat rooms, message boards, online shopping malls and news feeds.

Packet
A packet refers to the unit of data routed between an origin and a destination on the Internet. When any file (email message, HTML file, GIF file, URL request, and so forth) is sent from one place to another on the Internet, the Transport Control Protocol (TCP) layer of TCP/IP divides the file into sections that are an efficient size for routing. Each of these packets include the Internet address of the destination.

Ping
Ping is an Internet program that lets you verify that a particular Internet address exists and can accept requests.

Plug-and-play
Plug-and-play refers to when you can plug a device into a computer and have the computer recognise that the device is there.

Plug-ins
In the context of the Web, these are 'extensions' to your browser which enhance its functionality. Plug-ins enable you to play sound files or animations, for example.

PoPs
Points of Presence. Refers to the modems which you dial into to connect to the Internet.

POP3
Post Office Protocol 3. The most recent version of a standard protocol for receiving email. POP3 is a client-server protocol in which email is received and held for you by your Internet server. Periodically, you check your mailbox on the server and download any new mail.

Portal
Web site offering editorial 'channels' and Net services, such as search facilities, free email addresses, online chat and value-added extras.

Push technology
A mechanism for sending information to your Web browser from a Web site at pre-arranged intervals. You state what information you are interested in and how often you want it updated and the Web site transmits it to you accordingly.

Router
A special-purpose computer (or software package) that handles the connection between two or more networks. Routers spend all their time looking at the destination addresses of the packets passing through them and deciding which route to send them on.

Search Engine
Web sites which contain powerful search facilities which let users find other pages on a specific subject.

Server
A computer that provides a service to other computers on a network such as the Internet. For example, a Web server obtains, or 'serves' Web pages and other files as requested, sending them to the browser.

Shareware
Shareware refers to software that is distributed free on a trial basis with the understanding that the user will probably pay for it later.

SMTP
Simple Mail Transfer Protocol. A common protocol for sending email across the Internet, gradually being replaced by POP3.

Spider
Also known as a 'webcrawler', a spider is a program that visits Web sites and reads their pages and other information in order to create entries for a search engine index.

Streaming Media
Streaming media is streaming video with sound. The best thing about streaming media is that a Web user does not have to wait to download a large file before seeing the video or hearing the sound. Instead, the media is sent in a continuous stream and is played as it arrives. The user needs a player, which is a special program that uncompresses and sends video data to the display and audio data to speakers. One of the most popular is RealNetworks' RealPlayer.

TCP/IP
Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol. The common language that all computers connected to the Internet use in order to communicate with each other. No TCP/IP, no Internet!

Telnet
The Telnet protocol allows you to use the Internet to type to another user's computer much as if you were sitting in front of it. This is known as 'terminal emulation.' Examples of Telnet services include searchable databases, bulletin boards and real-time chatlines.

URL
Uniform Resource Locator. This refers to the characters that specify the address of a resource on the Web. It could be a Web page in the form of http:// or an FTP site in the form of ftp://.

USB
USB (Universal Serial Bus) is a plug-and-play interface between a computer and add-on devices (such as audio players, joysticks, keyboards, telephones, scanners, and printers). With USB, a new device can be added to your computer without having to add an adapter card or even having to turn the computer off.

Usenet
Usenet is basically a collection of notes on various subjects that have been posted to servers on a worldwide network. Each subject collection of posted notes is known as a newsgroup.

Virtual Hosting
On the Internet, virtual hosting is the provision of Web server and other services so that a company or individual don't have to buy and maintain their own Web server host with a line to the Internet.

A virtual hosting provider is sometimes also called a Web or Internet 'space provider.'

VRML
Virtual Reality Modelling Language. A programming language which is used to create the illusion of 3D objects for on-screen virtual reality environments. The computer shows an apparently three-dimensional object from a certain position, and then creates the illusion of movement by gradually changing the viewpoint.

Web browser
A program installed in your computer's memory that reads, or 'browses' Web pages. A full Internet connection is needed for them to browse the Web. Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator are the most popular Web browsers, now available in 'suites' along with many other essential Internet programs.

Webcasting
Webcasting (push technology) refers to the prearranged updating of news, weather, or any other selected information on a computer user's desktop interface. This is achieved through periodic, and generally unobtrusive, transmission over the World Wide Web (which includes the use of the Web protocol on intranets).

Web ring
A Web ring is a way of interlinking related Web sites so that you can visit each site one after the other, eventually (if you keep going) returning to the first Web site.

ONLY £4.99 INCLUDING POSTAGE & PACKING

BACK ISSUES

Increase your Net know-how by adding to your PRACTICAL INTERNET collection. Many issues, packed with features and reviews, are still available for just £4.99 each

26

Loads of crafty ways to cut back on your phone bills. Still strapped for cash? Then give a free ISP a try – we round up over 25 free service providers.
• Price: £4.99 incl. p&p

29

Learn how to fix common Net hassles without having to phone a support desk, plus how to protect against Net viruses and a look at the PIII processor.
• Price: £4.99 incl. p&p

31

Make your PC a lean, mean, virus-busting machine with our tips and hints. Also, how to make your Web site as busy as spaghetti junction.
• Price: £4.99 incl. p&p

32

20 of the UK's top free ISPs get tested for speed, reliability and tech support. Also, how to protect your computer against the Y2K Bug. With free HTML book.
• Price: £4.99 incl. p&p

33

How to cash in on ISP giveaways, wipe out junk mail, watch live sports coverage over the Internet and make money at online share dealing.
• Price: £4.99 incl. p&p

34

Make sure your online searches come up trumps every time by following our 101 tips. We also test alternative browsers and tell you how to avoid Net scams.
• Price: £4.99 incl. p&p

35

Flirt, gossip, natter and seduce: the complete guide to chatting and meeting pals online. Also, Net millionaires reveal how they got rich and how you can too!
• Price: £4.99 incl. p&p

36

Read our report on ISPs offering 0800 Net access. Are they any good? Will it revolutionise the Internet? Find out here. Also, how to set up shop online.
• Price: £4.99 incl. p&p

37

Learn how you can use the Net to be your own boss and work from home. Also, we test 12 top Web site building packages to see which comes out on top.
• Price: £4.99 incl. p&p

38

Find out how to use the Net on the move, plus how to learn a new language online for free and how you can become a NetGaming guru!
• Price: £4.99 incl. p&p

Call our credit card hotline on 01202 200200

PRACTICAL INTERNET **BACK ISSUES** ORDER FORM

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR CHOICE
ISSUE 23 ONWARDS: £4.99 INC. P&P

ISSUE 1	☐	ISSUE 23	☐
ISSUE 4	☐	ISSUE 24	☐
ISSUE 8	☐	ISSUE 25	☒
ISSUE 9	☐	ISSUE 26	☐
ISSUE 10	☐	ISSUE 27	☒
ISSUE 11	☐	ISSUE 28	☒
ISSUE 12	☐	ISSUE 29	☐
ISSUE 13	☒	ISSUE 30	☒
ISSUE 15	☒	ISSUE 31	☒
ISSUE 16	☒	ISSUE 32	☐
ISSUE 17	☒	ISSUE 33	☐
ISSUE 18	☐	ISSUE 34	☐
ISSUE 19	☐	ISSUE 35	☐
ISSUE 20	☐	ISSUE 36	☐
ISSUE 21	☐	ISSUE 37	☐
ISSUE 22	☐	ISSUE 38	☐

TOTAL £.....

PERSONAL DETAILS

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

.....

Postcode: .....

Telephone No: .....

Email: .....

METHOD OF PAYMENT (NO CASH PLEASE)

Please indicate your choice of method

☐ CHEQUE Please make payable to Paragon Publishing Ltd.

☐ CREDIT CARD

☐ Access ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Switch

Card number:
☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ | ☐☐☐
Switch only

Expiry date: ☐☐/☐☐

Issue No. ☐☐ (Switch only)

Signature: .....

WHERE TO SEND THE FORM

Please return the coupon, or a photocopy of it, (together with your cheque/PO made payable to Paragon Publishing Ltd.) in an envelope to the following address: Practical Internet Back Issues, Paragon Publishing Ltd, FREEPOST (BH 1255), Bournemouth BH1 2TA. It won't cost you a penny in stamps if posted within the UK. You can, of course, call our credit card hotline on **01202 200200** (answerphone after 6pm) or fax us direct with your order on **01202 200217.**

Save £££s

www.cheaptobacco.com

Warning: Cigarette smoking can seriously damage your health

ONE STEP WEB HOSTING

for businesses that are serious about the Internet

BUSINESS PRO

£199 PER YEAR INCLUDING DOMAIN REGISTRATION FEES

SETUP IS FREE AND TAKES LESS THAN 1 HR

100MB fast UK-based webspace, 100 POP3 boxes, unlimited email addresses, auto-responders & announcement lists. Own CGI-BIN & pre-installed scripts. Automatic graphical access statistics. Unlimited updates via FTP or web. Technical support & online help. 2GB bandwidth allowance per month. www.yourname.co.uk or .com, including domain registration fees for two years. Miva, PHP3, MySQL and RealAudio support. Secure server access. FrontPage extensions. Virtual Control Panel™ for easy admin. Free 60 minute setup. 30 day money-back guarantee.

WebFusion® Seriously Easy Web Hosting

sales@webfusion.co.uk
www.webfusion.co.uk

CALL NOW: 0115 9170000

PRICES EXCLUDE VAT. PAYMENT BY DEBIT/CREDIT CARD WELCOME

www.names-online.co.uk

.co.uk	.com
£30 + VAT	£65 + VAT

NO HIDDEN COSTS

MODEM DIAL

FULL ACCESS

09068617121

SENSATIONS BBS

Fast, Easy, Anonymous BBS with over 100,000 Programs.

On-line Everything for your Business or Pleasure needs.

All Speeds Upto 38,400. Full Access & Unlimited Downloads.

CALLS CHARGED AT 60p PER MIN. P.O.BOX 107, MANCHESTER M7 1PX

Interesting Devices Ltd

Free Gift with orders over £50. Choice of Playstation Memory card or Flashing Keyring. Just quote PRIFREE

PSXAMP MP3 Adapter

MP3 & MPEG 3 are now the most searched for expressions on the internet. MP3 is a form of audio compression that can compress CD audio up to 10 times. Now you can store up to 12 hours of CD quality audio on to a single CD. To enable you to play back MP3 files you need special software on your PC or you need expensive dedicated hardware. If you own a Playstation, the PSXAMP will allow you play your MP3 CDs at a much cheaper price than other dedicated hardware. You can edit and save your own playlists to standard playstation memory cards. For more information visit http://psxamp.co.uk

£33.99 +vat

CopyALL 4.0

£99 +vat

CopyALL 4.0 is a SCSI Interface that allows you to control your SCSI drives without the need for a PC. Simply fit your CD Reader and CD Recorder into an external case and the CopyALL will simplify the CD duplication process for you. It leaves your PC free for you to use for more important things. 4 operation modes: "Copy", "Test", "Safe-Copy" & "Scan".

http://interesting-devices.com/copyall

CD Recorders

£389 +vat

No PC required. 4x Write speed. 8 speed version also available for additional cost. All quality brand CD Recorders and CD Readers including Sony, Plextor, Yamaha etc. Can also be connected to your PC if you need to compile your own data (PC SCSI card required). Supplied with CD Recording software for the PC. Based on the above CopyALL SCSI interface

Vist our websites below for many more Interesting Devices 100s of devices for Playstation, Nintendo, Dreamcast and other electronic goods. Some too Hot to mention here.

Postage and Packaging = £2 small items £10 large items

Phone: 024 76339805 Fax: 024 76339804 Voice lines open 10am-4pm Mon-Fri

Interesting Devices
24 The Crescent
Keresley End
Coventry
CV7 8JT

http://interesting-devices.com
http://dvd-world.co.uk
http://psxamp.co.uk
http://z64.co.uk

danweb

Domain Name Registration & Hosting

2 years

.CO.UK £39.99 .COM £69.99

FREE web & email forwarding includes VAT & all NIC fees

- FULL CGI/SSI/PERL
- MS FRONTPAGE
- SSL SECURE SERVER
- GRAPHICAL STATS
- UNIX & NT SERVERS
- BACKBONE CONNECTION
- 24HR SUPPORT
- NO HIDDEN COSTS

Tel: 0800 956 7642
Fax: 01302 539601
E-Mail: sales@danweb.co.uk

www.danweb.co.uk

1 GIGABYTE + 1000

1GB fast UK-based webspace & **1000** POP3 email boxes. www.yourname.co.uk and www.anothername.co.uk **included**, extra virtual servers only £25 per year. **No limit** on number or configuration of sub-accounts. **2GB bandwidth** allowance per month for each domain. Virtual Control Panel™ for you and for each of your customers. Every sub-account has **unlimited** email addresses, autoresponders & mailing lists, it's own **CGI-BIN**, support for Miva, PHP3, MySQL and RealAudio. **FTP** access and graphical statistics as standard. **Free** responsive technical support & online help.

Reseller Account

Ideal for:
Web Designers
Internet Consultants
Entrepreneurs

£50 PER MONTH - OR - £500 PER YEAR

SETUP IS FREE AND TAKES LESS THAN 1 HR

WebFusion®
Seriously Easy Web Hosting
sales@webfusion.co.uk
www.webfusion.co.uk

CALL NOW: 0115 9170000

PRICES EXCLUDE VAT AND DOMAIN FEES. CREDIT/DEBIT CARDS WELCOME

MODEM DIAL

STRANGEWAYS B.B.S

Full Access in 2 minutes

09068408040

105,000 Programs On-Line
Gigs of Glamour Pics

Live On-Line Chat
Games, Business, Pleasure

Follow these 5 Simple Steps to Log On Using Windows
1, Go to the Accessories Menu and click on Hyperterminal.
2, Double Click on the "hyperterm" Icon.
3, Enter name "Strangeways" and press "OK"
4, Enter Phone Number that's above and press "OK"
5, Click On "Dial" Simple!!!!

CALLS CHARGED AT 60P PER MIN. CD INTERNATIONAL, PO BOX 107, MANCHESTER M7 3WZ

Wholly owned by Gillett Multimedia (est. 1993) www.gmm.co.uk

UK — **We've got it covered!**

The sensible way to register your domain
www.ukdomains.net
The safest place to host your site
www.ukhosting.net
The superb design solution
www.ukwebdesign.net
The secure way to sell your products online
www.ukecommerce.net
The simplest way to get your club on the net
www.ukclubnames.net

01353 665577

Gillett Multimedia, Alexander House, 38 Fore Hill, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB7 4ZA

SERIOUSLY EASY WEB HOSTING®

FREE, RESPONSIVE, FRIENDLY TECHNICAL SUPPORT

VIRTUAL CONTROL PANEL™
Control Everything from the Web
Read and send email, automatically install 'guestbook', 'webboard', 'counter' and other scripts without any programming knowledge. Setup email addresses, announcement lists and autoresponders, upload files, manage directories, and much much more

£9.95 PER MONTH

with WebFusion, it really is

WEBSPACE MADE EASY

100MB Fast UK-based webspace, www.yourname.co.uk or .com, unlimited email addresses, CGI-BIN, graphical statistics, announcement list, RealAudio, FTP access, Virtual Control Panel™

SETUP IS FREE AND TAKES LESS THAN AN HOUR

WebFusion®
Seriously Easy Web Hosting
sales@webfusion.co.uk
www.webfusion.co.uk

CALL NOW: 0115 9170000

THE FUNNIEST WAY TO WIND UP A FRIEND!

CALL ONE OF THE NUMBERS BELOW, PUT IT THROUGH TO A MATE...

...THEN WAIT FOR THE REACTION

MR. FURY
09067 360041

THE DETECTIVE
09067 360042

IRATE DELIVERY DRIVER
09067 360044

MR. STAMMER
09067 360043

MY DAUGHTER'S PREGNANT
09067 360045

Calls charged at £1 in at all times. Jokelines, P.O. Box 43, Warminster, BA12 7PP
PLEASE SEEK PERMISSION FROM THE PERSON PAYING THE BILL BEFORE CALLING

CBS Corporate Business Solutions

- .co.uk names £10 inc nominet fee & vat. No hidden charges or transfer fees
- Domain name registration
- Domain hosting
- Secure servers / e-commerce
- Web Design
- 56.6k/ISDN dial up accounts
- Reseller packages
- Business hosting
- E-mail accounts
- Secure shop supplied with ALL business hosting packages

www.cbsolutions.co.uk
Tel: 01443 408818

ORBITALNET
Your Internet Partner

Domain Name Registration
Website Hosting
NT or UNIX
Server Co-location
E-Commerce & COWS Hosting

For All Internet Solutions, Call us NOW 0800 3891397
www.orbitalnet.co.uk
Company Registered in England & Wales no 376505 All Users accept our Terms & Conditions @ www.orbitalnet.co.uk

Make a name for yourself
Domain Names £11.50pa
Includes all Naming Committee charges
FREE lifetime e-mail forwarding FREE lifetime web forwarding
nic names
www.nicnames.co.uk
We beat all quotes Call for details
UK Domains £29 reg Fee (one off)
.com £49 reg Fee (one off)
Just add VAT, NO other hidden costs !
Hosting over 50,000 domains for over 5000 clients
including Virgin Net, Oftel and Samsung
0800 731 4780

FREE
Domain name registration
FREE
Domains from £5 p.a. Inc VAT
100MB Webspace with
hosting service package *plus...*
FREE Microsoft Frontpage Extensions
FREE Web Email Account
FREE POP3 Email Account - Unlimited Alias
FREE Mail Forwarding
FREE Account Setup
FREE Bandwidth - 155Mbs Connection
Don't forget, apply now and take advantage of this BIG offer
order online
www.easyspace.com

Set yourself FREE

With an ISP that lets YOU share in the riches of the Internet

Free ISP Shares offers you a new concept. It gives you the possibility of directly benefiting financially from your use of the Internet, and much more besides. It's a service that is fully customised to you, providing you with channels, information and entertainment that reflects your tastes. Here are a few of the things you can expect...

- **FREE** Internet access
- **FREE** technical support on a standard national rate number
- **FREE** unlimited e.mails
- **FREE** 25Mb Web space
- **FREE** voice and fax to e.mail
- **FREE** personal Web based organiser
- **FREE** e.mail to voice (have your e.mails read to you)
- **FREE** mobile phone and Web domain
- **FREE** news, directories and search engines
- **FREE** shopping arcade
- **FREE** competitions

Visit the site NOW - and start sharing in the riches on the Internet TODAY -

http://www.freeispshares.co.uk

F.I.S.

F.I.S. Site powered by contactbox

For further information and your FREE CD call FREE ISP SHARES on 0870-70-111-70

Practical Internet
Getting Online Cheaper, Faster & Easier

Paragon Publishing Ltd, Paragon House,
St Peter's Road, Bournemouth BH1 2JS
Tel: +44 (0)1202 299900
Fax: +44 (0)1202 299955
Email: pi@paragon.co.uk
Web: www.paragon.co.uk/pi

EDITOR Mark Newman mnewman@paragon.co.uk
MANAGING EDITOR Geoff Harris geoffh@paragon.co.uk
DEPUTY EDITOR Paul Newman pauln@paragon.co.uk
SENIOR SUB-EDITOR Jo Cole pixie@paragon.co.uk
ONLINE GAMING EDITOR Geoff Spick geoffs@paragon.co.uk

CONTRIBUTORS
Chris Ellison, Clive Parker, Steve Patient, James Seabright, Nick Sweeney, Martin Pipe

GROUP ART EDITOR Claire Kendrick clairek@paragon.co.uk
SENIOR DESIGNER Ross Andrews rad@paragon.co.uk

ONLINE MANAGER Stuart Wynne ssw@paragon.co.uk
ONLINE EDITOR Gavin Cloggie

ADVERTISING MANAGER Jennie Brown 01202 200212 jennieb@paragon.co.uk
ADVERTISING EXECUTIVES Jennifer Ross (Sales Exec) 01202 200207 jennyr@paragon.co.uk

ADVERTISING PRODUCTION Dave Osborne (Manager) Jo James (Copy Controller) Lorraine Troughton (Designer) Jane Evans (Designer)

BUREAU MANAGER Chris Rees
SCANNING AND REPRO Liam O'Hara, Dom Eddy
CIRCULATION MANAGER Tim Harris

MARKETING MANAGER Monica Casal monica@paragon.co.uk
INTERNATIONAL LICENSING Catherine Blackman cathb@paragon.co.uk Tel: +44 (0)1202 200205 Fax: +44 (0)1202 200235

PRODUCTION DIRECTOR Jane Hawkins
ADVERTISING DIRECTOR Peter Cleall
CIRCULATION AND MARKETING DIRECTOR Kevin Petley
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR Damian Butt
ART DIRECTOR Mark Kendrick
FINANCE DIRECTOR Trevor Bedford
MANAGING DIRECTOR Mark Simpson

SUBSCRIPTIONS Tel: +44 (0)1202 200200 Fax: +44 (0)1202 200217 Email: subs@paragon.co.uk http://pi.subs.net Annual rates: UK: £36, Europe: £40, World: £46
PRINTED BY: Duncan Web Offset, Maidstone
DISTRIBUTED BY: Seymour International First Floor 86 Newman Street London W1P 3LD Tel: 0171 396 8000

Hardwired photos taken with Canon's PowerShot A5 Zoom camera

The makers of Practical Internet also produce: Internet Made Easy, What's Online, Web Pages Made Easy, DVD Review and other great reads

DISCLAIMER

Paragon Publishing cannot be held responsible for any unsolicited manuscripts/images. We retain full publishing rights over all articles and letters sent in for publication. Paragon Publishing cannot be held responsible for any problems with software supplied by third parties that appears on our cover-mounted CD-ROMs or similar promotions. All information is believed to be correct at time of going to press. Practical Internet recognises all copyrights and trademarks and tries to acknowledge the copyright holder where possible. Contact us if a copyright has not been acknowledged and oversights will be corrected.

Practical Internet: ISSN 1366-7661

PPA ABC AUDIT BUREAU OF CIRCULATIONS

Next month...

Our best ever issue!

PRACTICAL Internet gets a new look next month with an exciting re-design and more hands-on features, informative news and helpful tutorials. To celebrate, our free CD will feature an exclusive fully-working version of top Web page building program HoTMetaL Pro worth £100! And that's not all – you'll also get a free 64-page book on using the program to create your site. You'd be an April fool to miss out!

Issue 40 on sale 6 April 2000

FREE CD-ROM and book with issue 40

Become an e-entrepreneur!

EVER wondered how Net millionaires made their money? Have you ever had an idea for a great site that could earn you riches beyond your dreams? Next month, we tell you where to test your ideas out, how to get financial backing, when to launch your venture, and how to turn it into a cash cow!

Window shopping

WHAT does Microsoft's new PC operating system, Windows 2000, offer Net users? Should you be upgrading to it or is it just an expensive piece of marketing hype? *Practical Internet* issue 40 has the full story.

The Net name game

WHY put up with that long amateurish domain name for your Web site? You need a name ending in .com or .co.uk to be taken seriously – and next month we tell you exactly how to get yours.

DON'T MISS IT!

Guarantee a copy of PRACTICAL INTERNET every month by handing this form into your local newsagent.

Please reserve me a copy of Practical Internet (ISSN 1366-7661) priced £3.99 on a regular basis. Practical Internet is published 13 times a year.

Name .....

Address .....

..... Postcode .....

Phone Number .....

The next issue of PRACTICAL INTERNET is available on 6 April, 2000

Newsagent Information: Practical Internet is published by Paragon Publishing Ltd (tel: 01202 299900, fax: 01202 299955, www.paragon.co.uk) and is available from your local wholesaler. Practical Internet is distributed by Seymour (tel: 01202 299232) and is fully SOR.

Practical Internet Getting Online Cheaper, Faster & Easier

FAQs

This month FAQ asks larger than life telly and radio host **JONO COLEMAN** what he gets up to on the Net

INFO

Jono Coleman sprung to fame on Virgin Radio's Russ and Jono Show. He left this show to become the breakfast show host on London's Heart 1062 and recently performed a Webcast from an Ann Summers shop dressed in bondage gear after losing a bet on air! Game-for-a-laugh Jono also presents TV shows on VH1, Channel 5 and ITV.

Name: Jono Coleman
Age: 42
Occupation: Heart 102 Breakfast presenter

HIGH FIVE

JON COLEMAN'S FAB FIVE

1. **News Corporation**
www.newscorp.com

2. **Punch Magazine**
www.punchmag.com

3. **VH1**
www.vh1online.co.uk

4. **Broadcast.Com**
www.broadcast.com

5. **Battle of the Sexes**
www.battleofthesexes.com

1. How long have you been surfing the Net?
Around two years.

2. How many hours do you spend on it each day?
One to two hours.

3. What do you like most about the Net?
It makes the world a tiny place.

4. What do you like least about the Net?
It's all too easy to become addicted.

5. Tell us about your recent, erm, Webcast experience?
Guilty as charged. I can't remember it. My brain has blocked it out. But I did like wearing the fishnets... All the evidence is at Heart 1062 (www.heart1062.co.uk).

6. How do you think the Internet can help supplement radio broadcasts for listeners?
It's great to be able to listen anywhere in the world. Thanks to Net radio it's truly international.

7. Do you send a lot of emails to people? If yes, how many do you send a week?
Yes, lots from listeners and friends around the world. Probably around 100.

8. Do you have a Web site of your own? If so what's on it?
Yes, www.jonocoleman.co.uk. There's photos, comedy, jokes, an archive and some audio bits, too.

9. What are the latest entries to your Web browser bookmarks?
Australian Newspaper, International Webcams and the Millennium Dome.

10. If you had to put up a Web site about anything other than yourself what would it be about?
A site offering information to Australian, New Zealand and South African visitors to the UK.

11. Have you ever purchased anything over the Net?
Yes. CDs and groceries a couple of times, as well as computer stuff.

12. Do you ever chat online?
I'm not really into it. I'm usually too busy chatting face to face.

13. Would you ever date anyone you met on the Net?
Only if my wife was out of town (only kidding, honey).

14. Have you ever visited or paid to access a porn site on the Net?
I couldn't possibly tell you what I do during work time!

15. How should the Net be censored, if at all?
Kids should definitely be kept out of adult sites and checked on by parents. I'm against censorship of the over 18's.

16. Some people think the Net makes us more isolated and anti-social. What do you think?
Rubbish. It's one of the best ways to meet people and expand horizons.

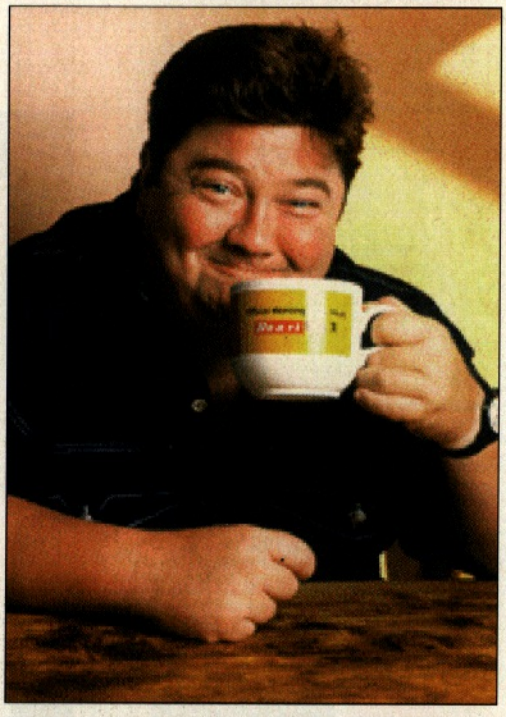
17. Name one positive thing you hope will happen to the Net over the next five years.
That it will be completely free to get on and off, and that it will be in every school worldwide.

Scantily clad Jono focus of a recent live Webcast from an Ann Summers shop

18. Name one negative thing that you hope won't happen to the Net over the next five years.
That world governments and huge companies take over and buy it up.

19. How has the Net changed your life?
A lot. I used to be very anti-nerd, anti-computer. Now I'm hooked.

20. Can your fans use the Net to keep up with what you're doing? If so how?
Yes they can... and they do! The Heart 106.2 Web site is updated daily with news of the Breakfast Show and I post news information quite regularly on my own site.



TRIAL CD

Build an online business with ecBuilder multiactive. Pro

E-commerce is not just for big business any more...

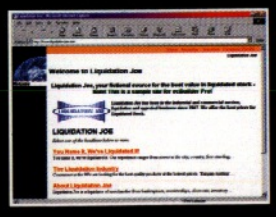
Use **ecBuilder Pro** to create a professional Web site to accept orders and enquiries online.

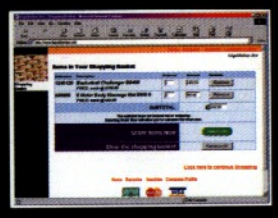
Point and click your way to a ready-to-go business Web site as you work through the Wizard-driven input screens:

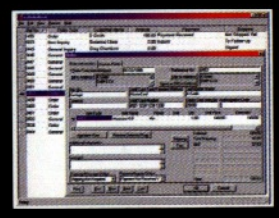
Fill in your company and product information Enhance your site with logos, animations, product shots and other graphics Add your catalogue items Choose your template design and colour scheme Upload your site to the World Wide Web!

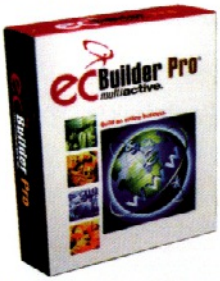
ecBuilder Pro offers you over 500 combinations of customisable templates. These templates are designed with business in mind, have clear navigational features, small file size, and advanced functionality. This allows you to create and establish your own Web site and the flexibility to manage it as and when you choose, without having to rely on expensive external resources.

Select from international currencies including the Euro. Add tax and shipping charges to accept orders from anywhere in the world. The shopping cart enables your customers to purchase multiple products from you safe in the knowledge that their details are protected using digital certificates for secure transactions.









Each Web site created by **ecBuilder Pro** includes:

■ **Profile page**: For your company profile, address and contact details ■ **100 Marketing pages:** Promote your business with descriptions and graphics ■ **Storefront page:** To showcase your products and services ■ **2,000 Catalogue items:** Featuring a Web page and graphic for each product or service offered ■ **Built-in browser:** Simulate and maintain your Web site on your own computer using the preview mode ■ **Order and Enquiry forms:** Each page or catalogue item links to a secure Web-based messaging system for customers to place orders and enquiries with you ■ **Site promotion:** Your Web site will be automatically submitted to Internet search engines based on the keywords you choose ■ **ecOrderDesk**: To accept and despatch orders from your new online customers as well as creating sales reports.

Survey your visitors. This valuable shopper information with order or enquiry information can then be transferred to your accounting, and customer management programs such as Maximizer, for order processing and fulfilment.

Visit our ecBuilder Pro demonstration site at www.ecbuilder.co.uk

ecBuilder Pro multiactive. TRIAL CD

☐ Please send me a free **ecBuilder Pro** Trial CD

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

Tel: _____ Fax: _____

E-mail: _____ PI 03/00

Why not complete the coupon and fax the **whole** page to us?

Post to: **Multiactive Software Ltd**
Bridge House, Bridge Avenue
Maidenhead, Berkshire
SL6 1RR England

Tel: +44 (0)1628 587777
Fax: +44 (0)1628 587778
E-mail: info@multiactive.co.uk
Web: **www.multiactive.co.uk**

Multiactive Software Ltd
Bridge House, Bridge Avenue
Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 1RR England

Alternatively download this and other trial products from: **www.multiactive.co.uk**

2000 LEAP YEAR

multiactive.

©1999 Multiactive Software. All trademarks acknowledged

Have you clicked yet?

So called 'free' Internet service providers give you free access to the net – but you are charged for every single Internet call you make. Whereas with ClaraNET, a monthly subscription of just £5.99 gives you 12 FREE HOURS of evening and weekend Internet call time.

For real Internet value, ClaraNET is right on the button.

ClaraNET

www.clara.net
0845 355 1000

- Unlimited email addresses
- 24 hr support line at local rates
- 50MB webspace